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PLUCK AND LUCK

LITTLE DAN DEADSHOT OR A CITY BOY IN THE WILD WEST AND OTHER STORIES

By An Old Scout



Dan, clutching his rifle, went flying into the air. He landed at the feet of Bill Lancaster and Miss Deacon. "Oh, he's killed! He's dead!" screamed the girl. "He plugged the silver potato all right," cried Ike Knee.

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PLUCK AND LUCK

Stories of Adventure

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Little Dan Deadshot

— OR —

A CITY BOY IN THE WILD WEST

By AN OLD SCOUT

CHAPTER I.

A TOMESTONE AMONG BOWERY TOUGHS.

They called him Dan Deadshot, because he never missed the mark. The "Little" came naturally. He stood only four feet eight in his shoes, and he was small in every other way as well as in height.

Before the "Deadshot" was tacked on he was merely "Dan." If he had any other name he did not know it. Once he asked Max Wittpenn, the proprietor of the Bowery Shooting Gallery, about it, and the only answer he got was to "Shut up his head."

Perhaps the boy was a born marksman, for he had a keen, accurate eye, but his skill came through severe training.

When he was a mere child Max Wittpenn, who in early life had been a scout in the West, took him in hand, and taught him to handle both rifle and revolver.

If he missed, that night he got the strap over his bare back. If he hit the bull's-eye Max would growl out:

"Huh! You're in luck. I'd have laid that strap over you if you hadn't done that."

In fact, it was little grub and plenty of strap almost all the time.

Still, the life in the Bowery cellar shooting gallery was all the life Dan knew.

All day long he was kept busy, either waiting on customers or cleaning up.

All through the long evening up to midnight it was the same, and then came the floor to sleep on with the big setter dog Bruno for a pillow.

Dan seldom took off his clothes till they dropped off; he never remembered sleeping in a bed or having more than one dirty blanket to cover him. Even Max slept in a hammock, which he slung across the shooting gallery when closing up time came.

Sometimes Dan got tips from the patrons of the gallery, but Max always took them away from him.

Almost every night Dan was called upon to show his skill with the rifle on bets which Max was always making with the customers.

Max won a lot of money in this way, but he never gave Dan a cent.

Dan often thought of running away and going out into the wild country Max was so fond of telling about.

One night he did run away, and we now propose to tell the manner in which it came about.

It had rained all that day, and as scarcely a soul entered the shooting gallery, Max was very cross, and as he had imbibed several extra tumblers of five-cent whisky at the pan-handler's joint next door to console him over the dullness of business, by the time evening set in his temper, always bad, was at its worst.

Up to nine o'clock there had been in the place only four

boys and one drunken man, who came near shooting Dan through the head.

"By gosh, if we don't get a customer inside of the next ten minutes I'm going to close up, Dan," said Max, after he had run the drunken man up to the sidewalk and tumbled him into the gutter. "You go around to the sheeny's in Hester street, get a loaf of schwarzbrot and half a pound of Schweitzer cheese, and we'll have our supper now."

Dan hurried off to do the errand, and when he came back he found five customers in the gallery, a party of four young toughs, who were shooting at the pipes and movable targets, and a long, lanky fellow with a big white felt hat and coarse black hair reaching down below his shoulders, who stood watching the shooting in silence, puffing away at a bad Bowery cigar.

Max was jumping around with the guns, and tending the targets, a job he never liked, even when he was sober, and positively hated when he was drunk.

"Here, you little snoozer!" he called. "What the deuce kept you so long? Put that stuff in the cupboard and come and tend to your business!"

"That's the way with them boys," he added to the long-haired stranger. "Once you let them go out on the street they never come back again."

Sping! went the little ball behind the red curtain.

"Hully chee!" cried the tough who had fired the shot. "I got it that time."

"And about time yer did," drawled the long-haired stranger. "That makes ten shots wild to one straight."

"Who you talking to?" snapped the tough. "Mind your own business!"

"Oh, yes, I'll mind my own business," retorted the stranger, "but if I had you out in Tombstone I'd stand you on your head for them words."

"Yer can't do it!" flashed the tough, brave in the presence of his gang. "Mebbe you think you could do better. You're only a faker, anyhow. I'd like to bet you never handled a gun in your life."

"No quarreling allowed, gentlemen!" he called out. "Let whoever claims to be the best shot prove it. I've got a target what can be hit five times running by only one feller on earth, and he's in this place right now."

"I suppose you mean me, neighbor," said the man from Tombstone, with a loud laugh.

"Bet you ten dollars you can't hit it," said Max.

"I'll go yer," replied the man, producing a big roll of bills.

Max was no thief, rough and dissipated though he was, and he gave the Tombstoner a warning look, for he saw the eyes of the gang fastened themselves on the roll.

The stranger was not taking hints that night, however, and deliberately selecting a ten-dollar bill he gave it to the tough who had hit the target to hold.

"Here, hold on! That won't do!" cried Max. "Put the money in this box hanging up here, and I'll cover it."

Somewhat to his surprise, the tough made no objection.

Max dropped another ten on top of it, and felt to see if his revolver was all right, expecting trouble later on.

"Bring on your target," drawled the Tombstoner, "and bring on your man."

"There's the man," said Max, pointing to Dan.

"Haw, haw, haw!" roared the stranger. "What, that little runt? Why, this is a joke. I thought you were in earnest. Better give me my money back."

"I'll do it if you say so," replied Max, "for I want you to understand that this is no joint, but a square house. All the same, I'm willing to let the bet stand."

"All right; let her go," said the Tombstoner. "If that 'ar kid can beat me shootin' you can keep the stakes and I'll give him a ten-spot for himself, besides."

"There you are, Dan!" cried Max. "There's your chance to make money. You are a sure winner of ten dollars to-night."

"Fix the target!" called Max. "Now, stranger, pick out your rifle. They are all good guns, but you shall have your choice. I want this to be a square deal."

Now, the target was a queer arrangement of Max's own invention.

It consisted of a square piece of board painted with black and white squares, like a checkerboard, with a small, round, black bull's-eye in the middle.

It was fixed to a pole, and by means of an arrangement of clockwork was made to move rapidly from side to side.

The moving black and white squares under the strong light were most confusing, and it was seldom that a customer came into the gallery who could hit the bull's-eye.

But Dan, who had been firing at it for the last five years, could hit it every time.

Dan wound up the thing and set it going.

The man from Tombstone eyed it dubiously.

"That's a great jigger!" he exclaimed. "It's wuss nor a bird on the wing or a running coyote, ten times over. However, I guess I can work the rifle. Let's see, what was the bet again?"

"Five times running," said Max. "First two shots don't count. I am willing to give you the chance to get used to the thing."

"All right. Let her go. I'll take this rifle but I want to try it on something else first."

The man from Tombstone was certainly a good shot under ordinary circumstances.

He plugged the bull's-eye of the stationary target three times hand running.

The toughs stood by and said never a word.

They had made up their minds to do business. They were merely waiting for the right time to begin.

"Now I'm ready," announced the stranger.

He fired at the jumping squares.

Sping!

"By thunder! You did hit it!" cried Max.

It was something unusual. His was genuine surprise.

Another shot.

Once more the bell sounded.

"Good enough!" cried Max. "You know your business, stranger. Bet on now!"

"All right," said the man from Tombstone triumphantly. "I've caught onto that 'ar little jumping-jack, I reckon. Thar won't be no occasion for the kid to shoot."

"We'll see about that," replied Max grimly. "A good many have said the same besides you. Sometimes you are a good shot all right. I wouldn't want to stand up in front of you even at two hundred yards away."

"I reckon you wouldn't," was the grim reply.

Max was beginning to feel nervous about his ten-dollar bill. But the fifth bang! brought no sping! after it.

Dan instantly pulled the cord that stopped the target.

There were four shots in the bull's-eye, the fifth having missed by less than a sixteenth of an inch.

"Thar you be! I'm out," said the Tombstoner quietly. "Now for the kid. What's his name?"

"We call him Little Dan Deadshot," replied Max, highly elated. "That's good enough. Bust ahead, Dan!"

"Same rifle?" said the Tombstoner.

"Same rifle it is," said Max. "No fake business in this shop, you can bet your life."

Five bangs! and five bull's-eyes was Dan's record.

The bet was won!

"Boy, you're a wonder!" cried the Tombstoner. "I wish to gosh you were going along with me. Wouldn't we wake up the Wild West?"

"Don't put such notions into the boy's head," growled Max,

taking the money out of the box. "You're satisfied, I suppose?"

"Sure," replied the Tombstoner. "I'm a square man, I am. Here, boy, here's your ten-dollar bill."

Again he flashed his roll.

The toughs stood ready.

It was Dan's business to watch such customers, but in his triumph he forgot.

Quick as lightning three jumped on the Tombstoner, one grabbing the roll, while the fourth, who had slipped into place behind Max, dealt him a blow in the back of the head, which threw him with terrible force to the floor.

"Murder! Police!" yelled Dan.

CHAPTER II.

DAN RUNS AWAY.

Little Dan Deadshot called "murder" and "police" because this was the first thing that came into his head.

He did not call but once, and even as he did it he started in to help himself, little dreaming that this action was destined to entirely alter his career.

The Arizonian, big, powerful fellow that he was, would speedily have made hash of either one of his assailants, but when it came to three, it gave him something to do.

And it all had to be done in a moment. There was no chance to draw a revolver or pick up a gun.

While one held his hands another snatched his roll and fled up the steps of the shooting gallery, while the third struck the man a terrible blow in the face.

The fourth, having settled Max, jumped in to help, and would have added a blow in the back of the head, but before he had the chance to do it the Arizonian got his wind.

Then there were things doing!

The three men went down like nine pins!

"Murder! Police! Help! Murder!" yelled Max, now upon his hands and knees.

"My money! My money!" roared the Arizonian, giving each of the fallen toughs a savage kick in turn.

"That fellow ran off with it—the boy is after him!" gasped Max.

Without a word the man dashed up the steps and ran down the Bowery.

It had all been the work of a moment, yet he could see no one running ahead of him.

"I am going wrong," he thought, before he had covered half the block. "He went the other way."

Then as he started to turn a dwarfish figure darted out from the shadow of one of the pillars of the elevated railroad.

"Here's your money, mister. I got it away from him. You had better scoot around the corner and cut up Bayard street to Division. There's a tough gang here. They will lay you out sure!"

"I don't run from no man living!" cried the Arizonian, clutching the roll and drawing his revolver. "Let 'em come on."

"Get around the corner!" panted Dan. "You don't want trouble if you can get along without it. Say, is he dead?"

"Is who dead?"

"Max."

"You mean the proprietor of the shooting gallery—your father? No. He isn't hurt a bit."

"Then I'm off. Say, mister, I tripped that feller up and got the roll away from him when he fell. Then I yelled 'Cops' and scared him off."

"You are as brave a little fellow as you are honest. Here, take this for your pay. It's twenty. I owed you ten."

But Dan held back.

"I don't want your money, mister," he said. "I'm tired of New York. That man is not my father. He often said so. I'm going to run away right now. Take me out West with you."

"By thunder, I'd like to!" replied the Arizonian. "You're just a bully little chap and the best shot I ever seen. Come on, boy. We'll talk it over. I start West to-morrow. Perhaps I will take you with me."

They had already turned the corner, and were hurrying along Bayard street while this conversation was going on.

Continuing on down Division street, and thence to Park Row, they finally brought up at a cheap hotel on West street.

Nobody followed them.

The toughs had given it up long ago, and if Dan had only known it, Max was seriously injured, and was even then on his way to the hospital.

The whole current of the boy's life had changed, as he was soon to learn.

His companion said but little until they found themselves alone in a room together on one of the upper floors of the hotel.

"So you want to go West?" asked the Arizonian then, throwing aside his coat and lighting a cigar. "And you think you would like to go with me?"

"That's just what I want," replied Dan.

"My name is Tom. Out in Arizona they call me Tombstone Tom," continued the man. "What's yours?"

"Only Dan."

"Haven't you any other name?"

"People call me Dan Wittpenn. It isn't my name, though. He is not my father. He has told me so many a time."

"Then you don't know your last name—I'm not going to tell you mine."

"I'd tell mine if I knew it, but I don't. I don't know who I am or how I came to be living with Max Wittpenn, and he would never tell me. He calls me Dan Deadshot; that's all I know."

"Then Little Dan Deadshot let it be," laughed Tom.

"It's a rough life I am going into out West, my boy."

"I don't care, sir. It will just suit me."

"Mebbe you have that to find out yet. Well, I had a boy once. He would have been about your age if he had lived, but he didn't. I don't mind if I do take you. I can win a pot of money on your shooting, that's one thing sure."

"Oh, I can shoot!" cried Dan. "That's about the only thing I can do."

"When can you be ready to go? I start to-morrow."

"I'm ready now, sir."

"Don't 'sir' me. It isn't our style out West. What about asking the man at the shooting gallery, Max What-you-call-him? What about your clothes?"

"I haven't any clothes except these. I won't ask his leave. He beats me and half starves me. He's no good, even when he is sober, and as a general thing he's drunk all the time."

"The deuce you say! Don't he send you to school?"

"I never was inside of a school in my life."

"What?"

"That's right."

"Can't you read?"

"Yes; he taught me to read and to write a little."

"You talk well; better than I do."

"I talk as he talks. He's an educated man, in spite of the way he is now."

"All right; you shall go," said Tom. "I'll adopt you, and the money I'll win on your shooting will pay for your keep, but, mind you, Dan, you'll have to obey me in everything. They say I'm a bad man out West."

"I don't care what they say; if you are willing to take me I'm willing to go." Dan persisted. "If I don't go with you I'll go alone, if I have to walk. I've been meaning to run away this long time, and now I've done it. I'm never going back to Max again."

"All right," said Tom. "It's a bargain. Now, then, Dan, I've seen enough of New York to last me for one while. Let's turn in, and to-morrow we will start West."

CHAPTER III.

THE HOLD-UP AT HONRADEZ JUNCTION.

"Wake up, Dan! Wake up! We have got to get out of here."

Little Dan Deadshot, curled up in the corner of a seat in the smoking car of the Southern Pacific Express, opened his eyes to find himself being roughly shaken by his friend and patron, Tombstone Tom.

Dan stared at the man in a frightened way.

"Why, we haven't got to Tombstone yet, have we?" he stammered. "I thought you said it was a hundred miles."

"You have been asleep."

"Only a few minutes."

"Don't argue with me, boy, or I'll break your head," snarled Tom, seizing Dan by the collar and planting him bodily in the aisle. "Your business is not to argue, but to obey."

Dan bit his lip, and never said a word.

The little Bowery boy had learned a lot since he tied to Tombstone Tom.

Among other things, he had found out that instead of finding a friend, he had sold himself to a hard master.

He had jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire.

A week spent in Chicago had brought this information.

Details we do not propose to go into. Enough to state that

Dan knew now that he was in the clutches of a ruffianly crook, a murderer many times over, by his own boastful admissions—a thief!

Bound to go West, Dan had so far kept his mouth shut, taking all sorts of abuse, and never saying a word; but having run away once, he had firmly made up his mind to run away again, just as soon as they reached the furthest point in the West to which Tombstone Tom intended to go.

Tombstone, Arizona, was this point, so Tom had repeatedly said.

This, however, was not Tombstone. What did it all mean? Why were they to get off here?

It was long after midnight. There were but few passengers in the smoking car, and all of these had disposed themselves in various grotesque attitudes, and were as sound asleep as Little Dan Deadshot was before he had been disturbed by Tombstone Tom.

"Say, nothing, boy," whispered Tom. "Follow me."

Directly ahead was the express car, in which, of course, no passengers were allowed.

Dan knew that there were only two persons in the car, the express messenger and his assistant, a boy not much older than himself.

He had seen them at one of the stops.

The train was beginning to slow down as they passed out upon the platform.

Here Tom thrust a revolver into Dan's hand.

"Now is the time to show your gratitude for all I've done for you," he whispered. "While I hold up the man, you are to hold up the boy. Do you understand? If you flunk I'll blow your brains out. If you try to shoot me there are others waiting for us at the station who will riddle you with bullets. Go on."

Dan was neither startled nor surprised.

He had known for days that Tombstone Tom's business in New York was solely to learn at what time a certain sum of money to a bank in Tombstone was to be shipped West.

While he did not actually know that the money was in the express car of the train they were on, he suspected it.

Thus he was prepared for just some such business as this.

And Dan had no notion of risking his life for a couple of unknown expressmen.

All he wanted was the chance to "shake" Tom. Until then, he saw nothing for it but to do as he was told.

He opened the door of the express car and stepped in with wildly beating heart.

"Come, boy! What do you want here?" demanded the messenger. "No one allowed in this car."

His face turned deathly white when he saw Tombstone Tom come in through the door.

The moment Dan's back was turned, Tom had slipped on a mask of black cloth, which covered the lower part of his face.

"Hands up!" he cried, hoarsely. "This is my game!"

He covered the messenger with his revolver, and Dan, not daring to disobey, covered the boy.

At the same instant the train stopped.

Lights were flashing. Two shots rang out.

"Come out of that cab or I'll blow you to blazes!" some one shouted on ahead.

"A hold-up!" gasped the messenger.

It was so, as far as he was concerned, for his hands went up as high as he could possibly get them, the boy following suit.

"Keep them covered," growled Dan, thrusting another revolver into Dan's unoccupied hand.

Then he threw open the side door of the car.

"Hello!" he shouted. "I've got 'em!"

"Good enough!" came the response. "Be with you in a second."

"Is it all right?"

"Right as the mail. We've got the engineer and the fireman. There's a little muss with the conductor."

Bang!

A shot rang out in the darkness.

"It's all right now," called the voice. "The boys have shot him. Is the dough here?"

"Yes," replied Tom. "Come in! We need help here."

A masked man wearing a big slouch hat and boots which came up above his knees, sprang into the car.

"Thunder and guns! Where did you pick up this kid?" he cried.

"The kid is all right," retorted Tom. "He's a dead shot; beats me, and that's saying a good deal."

"Waal, I should remark!" was the answer. "But where's the graft?"

"In the safe, I s'pose. Where else should it be?"

"Open up, you," said the newcomer, turning to the messenger.

The man demurred, but it was only for a moment.

Then he opened the safe and pointed out the cash.

"I shall lose my job for this," he groaned.

"You would have lost your head if you hadn't done it," retorted Tom. "Tie him up, Tod, and the other one, too. We can work better if we don't have to watch 'em."

"What do you say to milking the Pullman and leaving this job to me?" Tod asked.

"Waal, I dunno. Hain't that being attended to?"

"No; there's only three outside."

"The deuce you say! Short-handed?"

"Yes. I couldn't get the boys together as I expected. I'll explain why later on."

"All right, then. I'll go yer. Shall I tie 'em up first?"

Tod assented, and it was done.

Leaving him to remove the money packages from the safe, Tom, ordering Dan to follow him, then jumped out of the car.

"You stick to me, Dan, and you will come in on this deal," he said. "Do you understand?"

"All right," said Dan, wondering what was coming next.

There was a masked man standing by the engine with a revolver in each hand.

Another stood just below the smoker, another stood down by the Pullman. All this Dan could see by the lights at the station.

He could read the name on the sign. It was Honradez Junction. All around the station it was as black as midnight, and, except for a big water tank, there was nothing to be seen.

"Howdy, Jim?" said Tom to the masked man, who had the Pullman conductor covered.

"Hello, Tom!" was the whispered response.

Then it was the same old question:

"Where did you pick up the kid?"

"On the Bowery," chuckled Tom. "Wait till you see him shoot, and you won't blame me none for picking him up."

He sprang upon the steps of the Pullman, but stood aside to let Dan go in first.

"Use your revolvers!" he whispered. "Shoot right through the car as soon as you get past the stateroom if there hain't nobody in the way."

It was desperate business for poor Dan.

His whole soul revolted against it, yet he dared not disobey.

But Tombstone Tom was to find out that there were some things Dan did dare to do before he got through with the job.

There was nobody in the aisle of the Pullman.

How many were concealed behind the curtains of the different berths Dan could only guess.

"Shoot!" repeated Tom, in a fierce whisper.

Dan fired twice.

"Ladies and gentlemen, you hear that music!" shouted Tom, whose pistols were now in his belt. "Get your valuables together. You are now in Arizona, and the law is that every one shall pay toll as soon as they cross the line."

Then the curtains of the nearest berth were thrown aside, and the pale face of a beautiful young girl appeared.

"Gentlemen, please take this, and do not trouble yourself further with this compartment," she said. "My father is very sick above me here."

The girl extended toward Dan a small roll of bills.

"That won't do!" cried Tom. "That's not all you've got. Shoot her, boy, unless she puts up more."

"Get out of this car!" cried Dan, suddenly wheeling around and pointing his revolver at the head of Tombstone Tom.

stone Gang—hold-up men, cattle thieves, bank breakers and all-around crooks.

Unheeding Dan's revolvers, he reached for his own, and would have killed the boy to a certainty if Dan had hesitated an instant longer, when all in that same instant a shot rang through the car, and Tombstone Tom, with one wild cry, fell dead.

But this was not Little Dan Deadshot's work.

Not but what the boy would have done it all right, but when it came to killing a man, Dan hesitated, and in that one second of hesitation the job was done by another hand.

The girl screamed and drew the curtains tight.

Instantly they were thrown open again, and an elderly man, wearing a black silk skull cap and holding a smoking revolver, looked out from the upper berth.

"Fasten the door at the end of the car, boy," he cried. "You'll find a catch on the lock. Guard it! Shoot the first man who tries to break in. Porter! Hey, you cowardly nigger! Fasten the door at the other end, if you are down there!"

He slipped out of the berth as Dan sprang to obey.

He was an old man, and so weak that when his bare feet touched the floor—he was but half dressed—he staggered against the berths.

"You cowards hiding behind those curtains had better stay where you are!" he shouted. "This brave little boy and the old man with one foot in the grave will defend you from this gang!"

Thus saying the old gentleman went staggering through the car, and joined the porter at the other end.

It was the last car of the train, and when the old man and the porter looked through the glass door they could see no one on the platform.

Not so with Dan.

He had scarcely pushed the catch of the door when one of the masked men sprang upon the car, and peered through the glass.

"That you, boy? Open the door!" he cried. "What's the meaning of them shots? Where's Tombstone Tom?"

"Tombstone Tom is dead!" shouted Dan, "and so will you be if you don't get off this car."

The masked man gave one look at Dan and his revolver, and then seized the coupling lever and uncoupled the car, instantly leaping from the platform.

Now, it must be remembered that Dan, although a city boy, and wise in the wiles of the Bowery, knew absolutely nothing about railroad trains.

He was so green that he did not realize what the man had done.

Long afterward he knew that it was the intention of these train robbers to murder Tombstone Tom themselves that night. They had grown tired of his arbitrary methods of ruling the gang, and had determined to divide the spoils of this robbery among themselves and cut him out.

Ignorant of all this, Dan bravely remained on guard, expecting the man to return.

Something altogether different happened.

In a minute, to his amazement, Dan saw the forward part of the train moving away.

He stared for a moment, thinking that the train would back up again, but it kept on moving, and in a moment vanished in the darkness.

"Hey, mister! They have run off with the cars!" shouted Dan, running back among the berths. "Hey! They are leaving us behind."

Several men had come out of the berths now.

They pushed past Dan, and went out upon the platform.

The boy followed them, descending to the ground.

There was not a living soul to be seen anywhere; but the conductor lay dead near the station platform.

The unfortunate station agent lay dead on the floor; the telegraph lines had been cut, and there was no way of communicating with the outside world.

"Let's get back and talk it over with that old man. He seems to know his business," said the other. "First thing we know another train will come along and knock that car to blazes, if something isn't done."

They hurried back toward the Pullman, but Dan did not move.

The fact was, Dan was scared.

Brought up on the Bowery, Dan had a wholesome horror of being arrested, and that horror had taken full possession of him now.

CHAPTER IV.

DAN GETS THE LARIAT.

If ever there was an astonished man in Arizona it was Tombstone Tom when Little Dan Deadshot turned on him, covering him with his revolver there in the aisle of the Pullman car.

Dan's patron was thoroughly bad in every respect.

He was not only a notorious gambler and thief, but a scoundrel many times over as well, and the recognized leader of what was known in that section of Arizona as the Tomb-

A murder had been committed. He himself had drawn a revolver on Tombstone Tom, and the old man had shot him. That was all right, as far as it went, but suppose the old man should turn around and say that he, Dan, did it?

Of course this was all very ridiculous, but it must be remembered that Little Dan Deadshot had been always surrounded by just such treacherous people. He had listened to the talk of crooks all his life, and had heard a lot of just such doings.

"I don't want nothing to do with none of them," said Dan to himself. "I was with Tom, and now he's done for. I s'pose there must be cops somewhere around here; if they catch me they will run me in, sure thing! I won't stand for it. While there is a chance I will run away."

Fully expecting to see a fat New York cop rise up out of that Arizona plain, ready to grab him, Dan, left to himself, took to his heels, and ran for his life, never dreaming that if he had kept on running in a straight line in the direction he had chosen he might have gone for fifty miles without striking a house or a road.

In an instant Dan found himself plunged into absolute darkness.

Behind him were the lights of the stalled Pullman, but ahead there was not a glimmer, even the sky being overcast and the stars thus blotted out.

For about ten minutes Dan continued to run, and then all at once he stopped and listened.

"Horses coming!" he panted. "Who can it be? Mebbe they have mounted cops out here. I don't know where to go. If I keep on I shall be lost."

Dan turned aside and started to run again.

Heavens! He had made a blunder!

He was running right towards the horsemen, instead of away from them.

He was all mixed up.

Here they were, right upon him!

Suddenly the light of a dark lantern was flashed.

There was a band of as many as twenty mounted men circling around him.

"Hey, Joaquin!" a hoarse voice cried. "Hey! There he is! Gee! It's only a kid! Snake him into the saddle! He may know something worth telling. We'll make for the train."

Two of the horsemen stopped short.

One raised the lantern, flashing the light full upon Dan.

Suddenly there was a whizzing sound, and something came flying through the air, dropped over the boy's head, and tightened around his neck.

"Help! Murder!" yelled Dan, and in his excitement and terror he threw up both revolvers and fired wild at the two men.

CHAPTER V.

GATHERED IN BY A NEW GANG.

Dan was desperate, and no wonder, and yet if he had stopped to reflect he might have known that it was only a lariat that had caught him, for Max Wittpenn had often told him of all these things.

But Dan was not reasoning then, nor would any other boy have been when suddenly jerked from off his feet and dragged toward the horse upon which sat the man who had thrown the lariat.

"You gosh-blamed little runt! Who you plugging at with them thar pepper-boxes?" bawled the lassoer.

Meanwhile, the man with the lantern dropped from the saddle, struck the revolvers out of Dan's hands, caught him by the collar and lifted him bodily up to the man with the lariat, who seized him and placed him in the saddle in front of him.

"Now you behave, you monkey!" he cried, adding:

"Hey, Ike, freeze onto them revolvers. Gee! Dark as it is, he came blamed near doing me, for I heard the sing of the bullet. Hold up a minute. Wait till I get this lariat off his neck. Will you behave yourself, boy, or shall I choke you right now and chuck your carcass to the coyotes?"

"Take it off, mister," panted Dan. "I give in. I didn't do it. It was the old man in the top berth, but he had to or the girl would have been killed."

"What the blazes is he talking about, Henry?" cried the man addressed as Ike.

"Don't know, and don't care," replied Henry. "Somebody has been doing somebody else, I suppose, but we must be on the move if we want to wipe out the Tombstone gang."

"They are mounted cops, that's what they are," thought

Dan. "If the old man goes back on me I shall be pulled in for this."

And Dan, who hardly stood waist high alongside the giant who had captured him, resigned himself to his fate.

Meanwhile, the rest of the gang had gone dashing on toward the lights of the stalled Pullman.

Ike and Henry took the same course.

For a few moments Henry did not say a word; then all at once he blurted out:

"Say, I'll be golbusted if thar hain't only one car! The rest of the train is gone!"

"We are all too late, that's what," replied Ike, adding:

"But why don't you ask the kid?"

"How is it, boy? What's become of the rest of the train?" demanded Henry.

"It went away, sir."

"Who took it away?"

"I don't know."

"Were you on the train?"

"Yes, sir. I was with Tombstone Tom, but I didn't shoot him. It was the old man in the top berth. He had to do it, though. If he hadn't Tom would have shot the girl."

"Gee!" cried Henry. "I begin to understand this hyar situation. Do you mean to tell me that Tombstone Tom is dead?"

"Yes, sir."

"Don't 'sir' me, you little monkey! I'm Henry—that's my handle! Didn't the gang get the money in the express car?"

"Yes, Henry."

"The deuce! Then our fat is all in the fire, Ike."

"Thar's that man Deacon; you forget him," replied Ike. "If what Bill Lancaster heard is to be believed, he's wuth more to us nor the cash in the safe."

"Yes; but who can tell if he's on the train or not?"

"That's just it, but, say, the boys have got thar. Looks to me as if they were getting ready to do business, too."

"Right you are. We are not in it. Say, boy, where were you going when I lassoed you?"

"Nowhere," answered Dan. "I was just running away."

"Running away from what?"

"Oh, I don't know. I was scared, I guess."

"Half-witted," muttered Henry. "What's your name?"

"Dan Deadshot."

"Dan what?"

"Dan Deadshot. I can't help it if you don't like my name. It's the only one I've got."

"Somebody give it to you as a nickname, of course. Are you really a dead shot?"

"If it was daylight I'd soon show you," replied Dan, plucking up courage. "Say, mister, I don't amount to much. There's only one thing I can do, and that's to shoot."

"Haw, haw, haw!" laughed Henry. "Hear him talk! A little runt like you a dead shot?"

"I beat Tombstone Tom shooting, anyhow," persisted Dan. "That's why he brought me out West."

"So you came West with Tombstone Tom? Whar did he bring you from?"

"I met him on the Bowery in the shooting gallery where I worked."

"New York? Did you come from New York?"

"Yes, sir—Henry, I mean."

"Ike, I begin to understand this fellow," cried Henry. "He's some pick-up of Tombstone Tom's. There has been a fight, and Tom has come out second best."

"Glad of it," growled Ike. "It will save Bill Lancaster the trouble of doing him. Thar they come! They have cleaned out the car!"

They were now almost up to the stalled Pullman. Several of the gang who had remained on their horses held flaring pine torches, which threw plenty of light upon the scene.

Dan, who had pretty well recovered from his fright, had been watching all that was going on around the bar.

Several of the gang had entered and were now coming out again, driving ahead of them the fat St. Louis drummer and four other men.

These were lined up with their hands raised above their heads, and two of the gang went through their pockets.

Dan had abandoned the cop theory long before this.

He knew now that these men were just another gang of train robbers.

Soon they lined up with the torch bearers.

"Want any help, Bill?" Henry called out.

"No," replied a long-haired man, who seemed almost the duplicate of Tombstone Tom. "We are almost through."

"Is J. Hancock Deacon there?" Henry bawled.

"Yes, he is," was the reply, "but he's blamed near dead, and he has his daughter with him. Joaquin is going to fetch him out in a minute. The girl is helping him to get on his clothes."

"Good enough. We had better take her along, too."

"Sure."

"How's the haul?"

"Only so-so. Tom's dead, Hen!"

"So this boy says. What about the rest of the train?"

"The gang seems to have made off with it; but I can't talk any more. I must go in the car and see about Deacon. Joaquin seems to be taking all night to his job."

Then the long-haired man entered the Pullman and disappeared.

"J. Hancock Deacon must be the old man who shot Tom," Dan thought. "I wonder what it all means? I wonder what they are going to do with him. If that girl gets in with this crowd I'm sorry for her—that's all I can say."

But Dan did not say it aloud, for he was still in the saddle in front of Henry.

"Where did you get the grasshopper, Hen?" called another of the gang.

"Oh, I lassoed him back here a piece," chuckled Henry. "Say, what do you think he says his name is?"

"Give it up."

"Dan Deadshot, and he stands ready to bet you fifty to five that he can beat you shooting with rifle, shotgun or revolver. What do you think of that?"

"Haw, haw, haw!" laughed the outlaw.

"If you'll back up that thar bet I'll take it, Hen."

A bright idea seized Dan.

Here was a chance to make a new friend, and that was just what he wanted now.

"Take him up, if you want to win that fifty, mister," he whispered. "It's no song and dance I'm giving you. It's the real thing."

"By thunder, I don't know what to think of you, monkey," replied Henry, in a low voice. "You seem mighty confident about your shooting. Is there anything into it—say?"

"There's a whole lot in it," replied Dan, "and there's fifty in it for you, if you will take up that bet."

"By thunder, I'll go yer," said Henry. "You are such a queer-looking little rooster that if you really can shoot I could win a pot of money on you all right."

"Then you wouldn't be the first one. Tombstone Tom scooped in as much as five hundred on my shooting while we were coming West."

"The deuce you say!"

"It's true."

"Hold up! I'll back yer, just for a flyer."

"Then you will win, make no mistake."

"Hello!" called the man who had talked about betting.

"I'll go you on that."

"What?" said Fred, who seemed to have forgotten all about the matter, which, of course, he had viewed only as a joke.

"The bet."

"Oh, yes! Are you in earnest?"

"Sure. Fifty to five that this boy can beat you shooting with rifle, shotgun or revolver, on three tries."

"Waal, all right," replied Fred, "if you want to throw away fifty dollars and see it land in my pocket, why, I'm your man."

Just then Bill Lancaster came out of the Pullman supporting the old gentleman who had shot Tombstone Tom.

The girl, looking white and scared, followed, and a lanky fellow with a strong Mexican cast of features brought up the rear.

"Bring up two horses for these hyar prisoners!" shouted Bill Lancaster. "We are through with our business here, and want to get a move on to us right now."

CHAPTER VI.

LITTLE DAN DEADSHOT PROVES HIMSELF A WING SHOT.

"Are you all ready, boys?" cried Bill Lancaster, looking around.

"All ready," replied Joaquin.

"Then let her go!" shouted Lancaster, and off they dashed into the darkness, heading northwest toward the Santa Rita Mountains, as Henry informed Dan.

There was a ride for the balance of the night ahead of them, Henry added, and he immediately began to question Dan about his shooting.

"You wait and see," said Dan. "I tell you, boss, you won't be disappointed, that's all."

"And you don't do any particular blowing, and that's why I believe you," said Henry. "Tell me all about yourself, boy."

Dan did it, and it is unnecessary to add that the telling did not take long.

"Now, looker hyar," said Dan, "if you are telling the dead open and shut truth I'll be your friend for life. I've always wanted to strike some much freak as you. We'll go into partnership, and you won't find me another Max Wittpenn, nor yet a Tombstone Tom, who was a blamed snipe. I'll divide fair with you every time."

For several hours the ride continued.

At last, reaching the foot of the Santa Rita range, they entered a narrow canyon, and following this until about half an hour after sunrise they came out into a beautiful valley walled in by towering cliffs on all sides, and watered by a clear, running stream.

"Thar!" cried Henry, pointing to the stream. "Thar you be, monkey. No such place as this yere in all Arizona. That's Wind River, and though you may not know it, we are the Wind River gang."

"Where does Wind River run to?" demanded Dan, for want of something better to say.

"Nowhar."

"Nowhere?"

"No; it takes a drop into the ground a little below hyar, and hain't never seen no more. Thar's the shanties. I have a little shack to myself at the end thar. We'll have breakfast first, monkey, and then we'll have that thar shooting. Say, can you shoot from the saddle?"

This is the first time I was ever in a saddle in my life," replied Dan, "but I'd like to bet that I can shoot anywhere that fellow can."

"He's no slouch. There isn't a better hand at the rifle in all Arizona than Fred Fee."

"I'm not afraid of him," replied Dan, confidently.

And he was not. It is a great source of satisfaction to know how to do some one thing well.

Little Dan Deadshot knew that he could shoot well, and his confidence in himself was absolute.

If it had been otherwise he might have been nervous when at about eleven o'clock Henry called him and informed him that the time for the test had come.

Dan had been wandering about the outlaw's camp all the morning, nobody paying any particular attention to him, as he thought, though if he had tried to escape he would have found that just the contrary was the truth.

Henry and the man Ike Knee now led him over to a level stretch along the bank of the creek, where as many as a dozen of the outlaws stood waiting for them, among the rest Fred Fee.

"Come along with your grasshopper, and let me put him out of business first shot," cried Fred, and a general laugh went up.

"Now, you fellers hold on till we get down ter business, will yer?" drawled Ike. "Hen knows what he's about as a general thing. Say, what is to be the range?"

Fred pointed down the creek to a tree about a hundred yards away.

"See that there cork what I've painted red and stuck into the tree?" he asked.

"Blamed if I can see it," replied Ike, who was somewhat near-sighted, and no shot at all.

"I see it all right, boss," answered Dan.

"Well?"

"It's all right," whispered Dan, too low to be heard by any one but Henry and Ike Knee.

The cork was a flat one, something over an inch in diameter.

"I can put five shots into that cork with a rifle hand running," said Fred Fee. "This will be the starter. You can arrange the next mark. Does that suit?"

"Yes," replied Henry, taking his cue from Dan.

"Does he use your rifle?"

"Yes; any objection?"

"None at all. Make ready."

"Fire away," said Henry, indifferently.

Fred Fee took his position, and throwing up a fine Winchester repeating rifle, fired five shots in quick succession.

Ike Knee and another hurried to the tree.

All in!" called Ike.

"Of course," said Fred Fee, looking disdainfully at Dan. "Now, then, boy!"

Dan took the rifle extended by Henry, the very duplicate of the one used by Fred Fee.

Ike Knee and the other outlaw stood aside, and Dan blazed away.

"By gaul! I believe you have covered him all right!" cried Henry, greatly delighted.

"All in!" cried Ike Knee, hastening to examine the cork. "Three cheers for the grasshopper! Hip! Hip! Hip! Hooray!"

Fred Fee seemed to be a popular character, and there was no very hearty response to the cheers.

"Waal," said Fred, "the boy can shoot some, it seems. This bet is more of an even thing than I thought for—that I'm willing to admit. Now, then, Hen, what's next?"

"It's a blame pity that we can't try a wing shot," drawled Henry, "but since game is so all-fired scarce we can't. I've been and fixed up five pertaters, which was about the only things I could find lying around loose in the camp, but I propose to let Ike fling 'em out one by one in different directions, and let you two try your hand at that."

"Done!" said Fred Fee. "That's dead easy, but why not let one of my friends do the throwing?"

"I can shoot a potato off the head of any man in this crowd who is willing to stand for it, gentlemen!" called Dan, in his clear, ringing voice.

"Waal, I've done that," said Fred Fee, "and I can do it ag'in, but thar's no feller here now who will stand up ag'in me, I reckon."

"We'll see about that later," said Henry. "My plan goes through first."

Just as he spoke Dan suddenly threw up his rifle and fired into the air.

Unseen by any one but himself, a large eagle, leaving one of the peaks, soared far overhead.

"Gee! An eagle!" cried Fred Fee. "That's a miss, but I can take him all right."

"Hold on! Hold on!" shouted Henry. "It wobbles, by gracious! Hooray! Down she comes! Now, if any one else wants to buck up against Little Dan Deadshot, I'm ready to cover the dust!"

CHAPTER VII.

SHOOTING AND BRONCHO BUSTING.

That Little Dan Deadshot should also be such an elegant wing-shot proves that he did not get all his practice in a shooting gallery, by any means.

This is true, and must be explained.

Wittpenn absolutely worshiped his rifle.

Eating, drinking and shooting made up the whole sum of his existence.

If Nick had been allowed to keep his gallery open on Sunday it is very probable that Little Dan Deadshot would never have become a wing-shot, but as this was not allowed, every pleasant Sunday Max was off for the country with Dan trotting after him, carrying two rifles packed away in a neat case, for Max was most particular about his guns.

Sometimes it was the Jersey meadows, sometimes the Flats around Far Rockaway; occasionally they would take an early morning train and ride away out on Long Island or up in New York State and put in the entire day hunting in the woods.

Dan used to love these trips, for Max would never drink a drop until they were all through with their rifle-practice, and, though always moody and sullen, he usually treated Dan more kindly when they were out together than at any other time.

And that was the way Dan learned to be a wing-shot and a hunter. It was really wonderful what skill he possessed. It was the combined result of thorough training, a cool head, and a most accurate eye.

While Henry was calling out praises for Dan, the eagle dropped at Fred Fee's feet.

Dan's shot had taken it just below the right eye. It was quite dead.

This put an end to all sneers, and from that hour Dan was never called "monkey" or "grasshopper," so long as he remained with the gang.

"It was a good shot all right," said Fred Fee. "For a city boy it is really wonderful. However did you come to learn to shoot so well?"

"Practice," replied Dan, shortly. "Are you ready to go on with the shooting?"

"I'm ready, as soon as we settle who's to throw," replied Fred Fee.

"Let your man do it," said Henry. "I don't care."

"No; I don't want that, either," replied Fred Fee. "I only want to have it a fair shake, that's all."

"Then shake for it," replied Henry. "I'll back the boy against you any old way."

They did shake for it, and the dice gave it to Ike Knee.

Henry then produced five small, round potatoes. One he had stained black in some way, another he had covered with tin foil, the third he had peeled, the fourth had a green leaf tightly tied around it, and the fifth was painted red, the difference in color being intended to confuse the eye.

Ike Knee climbed a tree, and Dan made ready for business, it having been decided that this time he should shoot first.

"Now, keep cool, Dan," whispered Henry. "This is no child's play. I wouldn't wonder if we catch him on this deal."

It had been arranged that Ike should throw each potato within three seconds of the preceding shot.

As it was impossible to tell from which direction the potato was to come, this constituted quite a test of skill.

"Time!" called Ike, and up flew the black potato high above the branches of the tree.

Bang!

To the right went the peeled potato.

Bang!

To the left flew the red potato.

Bang!

Right toward Dan himself came the silvered potato.

Bang!

Then the green one flew up into the air on a sharp angle, and the rifle banged again.

"All done!" cried Ike, jumping from the tree.

No one touched the potatoes. It was left for Ike to gather them up, Henry pointing out where they had fallen.

"That boy beats the band!" cried Ike, as he picked up the last potato. "No miss here, fellers. Look for yourselves and see."

It was so. Dan had pierced every potato.

"There you are," said Henry. "I made no mistake when I lassoed this lad. Say, Fred, what's to be the next trial after this—shotguns or revolvers? I reckon we are good for you any old way you have a mind to fix it."

"We'll stick to the rifle this trip," replied Fred, in no way rattled. "It's good shooting, I'm perfectly willing to admit."

"But the next test rests with you, and I'd like to know what it is to be."

"Wait till we have finished this deal. I haven't made up my mind yet," replied Fred Fee.

The feat was then repeated, and once more Dan was to have it proved to him that he had no mean antagonist, for the outcome of Fred Fee's shots was the same as his own.

Every potato was found pierced, and Ike threw them at the widest possible angles, too.

"Next!" cried Henry, getting anxious about his fifty dollars again.

"The next test will be the potatoes over again," said Fred Fee, "only it shall be done mounted, the shots to be made as we dash past the tree, and the potatoes all to be thrown out on the same side."

"Come now!" cried Henry. "That's not a fair shake. The boy don't know how to ride."

"Can't help that," replied Fred Fee, stubbornly. "The choice rests with me. If the boy can't shoot from the saddle, why, you had better hand over the fifty dollars, that's all."

A fierce argument followed, in which nearly all the outlaws took a hand.

At one time Dan thought they would come to an open fight, and begin firing at each other.

At last it was agreed to shake for it, and the dice gave the victory to Fred Fee.

It was now up to Dan to try his luck on a broncho or see his new patron lose his bet.

Henry called him aside, and anxiously asked him what he thought about it.

"Boss, if I can only keep in the saddle you need have no fear," said Dan, "but whether I can do that or not I don't know."

"Well, try your best, and I shan't hold you responsible if you fail," replied Henry. "You shall ride a little broncho I have just broken. He isn't the least afraid of a rifle, but he will buck once in a while. This is the only horse in the camp I dare trust you with, so you must do the best you can."

Dan raised no objection, although it must be admitted he had very little hope of success.

Henry had insisted that the boy be allowed to ride the broncho up and down a while and fire as many shots as he wished in the way of practice before the final test took place, and as all hands agreed that this was only fair, the shooting was postponed until three o'clock in the afternoon.

Ike Knee and several others remained around to see Dan try his luck on the broncho, Henry superintending matters, of course.

Henry was an old cowboy, and knew his business.

First thing he did was to introduce Dan to the broncho and allow him to feed him with wisps of grass, potatoes and an apple or two.

Soon the broncho began to grow quite friendly, and to rub his nose against Dan.

"Now," said Henry, and he lifted the little fellow into the saddle.

Just what Henry feared most happened.

Dan's exceedingly light weight bothered the horse, and before the boy could fairly get hold of the bridle the broncho bucked, and away went poor Dan flying over his head.

He landed on the grass unhurt in body, but deeply chagrined by the roars of laughter which went up from the outlaws.

"I reckon I'll take that pot, all right," chuckled Fred Fee, shouldering his rifle and walking away. "So long, Hen. You can cash in any time, old man."

"I'll do it yet," cried Dan, springing to his feet. "If I have to be tied to the saddle, I'll show you that I can shoot in one position just as well as another. There need be no cashing in till the test is made."

"Good for you!" cried Ike Knee. "By time, I believe you'll git thar yet. I'll bet any feller ten to five the feller wins."

There were no takers but Fred Fee, and he accepted the bet when he found nobody else was going to do it.

"Now, Henry, help me into the saddle. This time I'll bust this broncho or he shall bust me," said Dan.

Henry picked him up and tossed him into the saddle.

Once more that broncho tried his trick, but Dan got him by the mane just in time.

The broncho bucked and Dan's heels flew into the air, but he held on bravely, and plumped down into the saddle again when the broncho regained his feet.

CHAPTER VIII.

DAN DOES SOME HARD RIDING, ATTENDS A FUNERAL, AND LISTENS TO TALK ABOUT MILLIONS.

The rousing cheer which followed Dan's triumph would have encouraged anybody, boy or man.

Probably the broncho was the most surprised of any one. Away he flew with Dan clinging to his mane desperately.

Henry sprang upon another horse and dashed after them to be ready to assist in case of need.

But his help was not needed.

Once more Little Dan Deadshot's cool nerve brought him out a winner.

After the first moment of excitement was over Dan let go of the mane and got the bridle.

Henry had instructed him how to hold the horse in tight, and he did it now.

And Dan, who was rather childish, began to talk to the broncho and promise him apples.

He did not jerk the rein, or try to pull the horse in; he did not show in any way that he was afraid, for he actually was not. And all this was just the very best way to go about his job.

It was only a few moments before Dan had the broncho under control, for the time being at least, and turning him he rode back to meet Henry, reining in then as calmly as though nothing had occurred.

Henry was simply delighted.

"Say, you're a wonder!" he exclaimed. "I didn't believe you could do it. You just seem to catch on to whatever you undertake. That thar hoss hain't so bad, once you can get him in hand. It's your light weight what bothers him, but he'll soon get used to that. Now make a dash with me."

They rode along the creek for nearly two miles, and then turned and rode back a mile or so, when Henry halted.

"Turn around now, Dan, and see if you can keep the saddle without holding on. It may mean a tumble, but that will do a little chap like you no harm," Henry said.

And Dan did tumble twice.

The first time the broncho ran away, and Henry caught him; the second time he stopped and smelled of Dan.

"Give him the apple," cried Henry, and Dan did so, and while the broncho was munching it he leaped on his back.

This was a proud triumph. It was the first time Little Dan Deadshot had ever mounted a horse alone.

Back for a mile they rode, and Dan never touched the bridle.

Then came an hour of rifle practice in the saddle.

The broncho did not mind the shooting a bit, for he had been carefully trained to it.

Dan got two or three more tumbles, but what did that matter when he was now able to balance himself in the saddle and fire the rifle.

Henry threw up potatoes, and Dan was able to hit them nearly every time.

"Well, I never in all my life saw a boy take to the saddle the way you do," declared Henry, when they rode back to the camp for dinner. "I do believe there is hope for my fifty dollars yet."

But in spite of Henry's confidence, Dan was not so sure.

But, after all, the shooting did not come off that day.

Immediately after dinner Henry came to Dan and told him that the bet was off for a few days, for the reason that Mr. J. Hancock Deacon had just breathed his last in Bill Lancaster's hut.

"That's too bad," said Dan. "What will become of his daughter now?"

"Blamed if I know," replied Henry, shrugging his shoulders. "It hain't none of my funeral. Bill's running that 'ar."

Dan did more riding that afternoon, and he and the broncho grew to be firm friends.

That night the gang kept unusually quiet. In Henry's hut there was a poker game, which lasted till after one o'clock.

Dan, who was put to bed in one of the two rough wooden bunks which the place contained, was not able to sleep for some time, and he lay listening to their talk, which more than once turned on the girl, whose name Dan learned was Lelia.

Henry remarked that it would go hard with her now, and Ike Knee suggested that the best way out of the difficulty would be for her to marry Bill Lancaster.

"Mebbe Bill will object to that," another of the party said.

"If he does he's a fool," replied Henry. "The gal's a stunning little dame, and as I understand the situation if them two was to get married it will settle the whole business. However, tain't none of my affair."

To this last remark Ike Knee objected.

"It's the affair of the hull push," he said. "We have done fine under Bill's leadership. Let him scoop in that thar pot and he'll fly the coop, just as sure as I'm going to scoop in this hyar pot; then whar will we be?"

The conversation was dropped at this point, and soon afterward Dan dropped asleep to dream that he and Lelia Deacon ran away together, mounted on swift bronchos, which were perpetually bucking, and that they were pursued by the whole Wind River gang.

And Dan was soon destined to have much such an experience, but it was not to be an elopement with Lelia by a good deal.

Dan awoke next morning to find Henry shaking him in the bunk.

"You want to get up," he said. "There's going to be a funeral. I s'pose you want to see what's going on; boys usually do."

Dan did, and he stood by Henry when four stout outlaws laid the body of Mr. J. Hancock Deacon in the grave.

It was all very strange to Dan.

He had supposed these people to be Bill Lancaster's prisoners, but it would seem as if just the contrary was the case.

Bill, who had fished up an old prayer book somewhere, read the burial service, the outlaws standing around with bared heads.

The girl Lelia stood close to the leader.

She seemed to be somewhat affected, for she sobbed convulsively once or twice, but at the same time Dan, who was watching her closely, thought he could detect a look of triumph in her eyes.

"She's glad her father is dead, and I know it," thought Dan.

Then came the oddest part of it; all the outlaws were taking it in.

As the body, which was sewed up in a blanket, was lowered into the grave, which had been hastily dug to receive it, Lelia took Bill Lancaster's arm, and as they stood there together, apparently on the most friendly terms, the girl raised her veil, and every one noticed the remarkable resemblance between the two.

It was not until the grave had been filled that the mystery was explained by Bill himself, who, turning to the gang, said:

"Boys, I suppose you are wondering a whole lot over all this business, notwithstanding the hints I have given you from time to time as to what might come out of this. As we have always worked so well together, I think it is up to me to give you some little explanation, although I can't go into details. The man you have just helped me to bury was my father, and also the father of this lady by another marriage. We are thus half-brother and sister. I don't think any one will doubt it, for you can see at a glance that we look very much alike. It is many years since I have seen my father, during which time I have traveled under almost as many names. My real name is William Deacon, but to the Wind River gang I am always the same old Bill Lancaster. For the present my sister will remain with me, and I need not ask you to treat her with every respect. That is about all I have to say, boys, except to ask you to postpone that little shooting match which I hear you are so much interested in one day longer, out of respect to my father; otherwise, everything goes on just the same."

Having finished this little speech, Bill Lancaster walked away, with his sister leaning on his arm.

"Waal, now, if that hain't the blamedest, strangest twist!" exclaimed Fred Fee, when they had passed out of hearing. "For my part, I don't like the idea of having a woman in the camp to take their captain's attention away from business, not for a cent."

"Me, neither," added Ike Knee. "Say, what's come over Bill? He talks like a parson, blamed if he don't."

"And why not?" demanded Henry. "I heard Tombstone Tom say once—and I want you to understand he knowed Bill Lancaster as well as any man living—that Bill was a real parson, and got his larning in one of them big colleges in the East, whar they took football playing an' prize fighting, as well as readin', writin', 'rithmetic and jography; that's what Tom told me, anyhow, and I'll be blamed if I don't believe it's true."

Dan wandered away to where the broncho was feeding, and tried a turn at bareback riding.

The conversation did not interest him in the least.

What difference did it make to him whether the chief of the Wind River gang was destined to come in for a fortune or not?

And as he went dashing along the creek on the back of the broncho, Dan little dreamed how deeply he was to become interested in this very matter before many days had passed.

CHAPTER IX.

DAN WINS OUT AND IS BUCKED OUT.

The day passed off quietly enough.

In the afternoon Dan rode away down to the end of the valley with Henry, where he practiced at shooting potatoes from the saddle for the best part of two hours.

Of course he made some miss shots, but not many, and as the broncho behaved beautifully Dan was able to stick to the saddle the whole time.

The next afternoon at three o'clock had been fixed for the last trial of skill on the bet.

Dan felt confident that he would be able to hold his own.

The outlaws had all made much of the queer little mannikin, and Dan began to think that they were pretty decent sort of fellows after all, and to feel very much at home.

It had been decided that the Mexican Greaser, Joaquin, should throw the potatoes from the tree, and, further, that Dan should shoot first.

The entire gang came out to witness the contest, Bill Lancaster and his sister among the rest.

From the time he had first entered the camp the chief of the Wind River gang had never spoken a word to Dan, but now as the pair came up together Bill Lancaster called the boy aside, saying to the gang as he did so: "Give me a moment with him, boys."

Dan heartily wished Bill Lancaster had chosen some other time to make his acquaintance, for the way the man stared at him made him nervous.

Miss Deacon gave him a most searching look, too, and between them both Dan got a little rattled. He could not imagine what they wanted to see him for.

"They tell me," said Bill Lancaster, when they were out of the hearing of the gang, "that you call yourself 'Little Dan Deadshot.' What's your real name?"

"I don't know, sir," replied Dan.

"Come, now," none of that," replied the outlaw. "Of course you know. Out with it at once."

"If I knew I'd tell you, sir," replied Dan, "but I really don't. Of course I must have some other name, but nobody ever told me what it was."

"He's just about the size, Bill," whispered the girl. "Make him tell."

"I hear what you are saying, Miss," said Dan boldly. "I want you to understand I am telling the truth. If I knew what my real name was I'd tell you in a minute. Why shouldn't I? I haven't done anything to be ashamed of ever in my life."

"He evidently doesn't know, Lelia," said Bill Lancaster. "He is telling the same story now that he told to Henry. Boy, where were you born?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Where were you brought up?"

"In New York. I don't remember ever being anywhere else till I came here. I always lived with Max Wittpenn, who kept the shooting gallery on the Bowery. He told me many a time that he wasn't my father, but he wouldn't tell me who was."

"Strange," muttered Bill. "The man was a great marksman, you know, Lelia."

"Do you mean Max?" asked Dan. "There wasn't any man living could beat him when he was sober; trouble was he was almost always drunk."

"What was this man's business before he opened the shooting gallery, do you know?" asked Bill Lancaster, turning suddenly upon Dan.

"He used to be a scout, sir."

"By Jove!" exclaimed the outlaw. "Lelia, what do you think of that?"

"What I have thought from the first," replied the girl, greatly agitated. "Now was I such a fool?"

"Did you ever hear him called any other name than Max Wittpenn?" demanded Bill.

"No, sir," replied Dan. "I never did. Did you know him?"

"No, no! I didn't know him," replied Bill hastily. "Look here, Dan, after this shooting match is over you come to my house. I want to talk to you some more."

"All right, sir," replied Dan, and he hurried away.

"What did he want to see you for?" asked Henry suspiciously when Dan rejoined him.

"Oh, I don't know. He asked me a whole lot of questions about myself that I couldn't answer," replied Dan. "I don't like that girl, Henry. The way she looked at me made me awful nervous."

"I don't like her, neither," growled Henry. "It's a blamed shame to get you so rattled. Never you mind, Dan. I'll stand by you through thick and thin. I'll know what this means, too."

"Come," cried Fred Fee. "While all this chinning is going on we are waiting. Hurry up."

The time had come.

Little Dan Deadshot sprang into the saddle and rode toward the starting point.

Joaquin gave the signal and Dan started his broncho on the run.

As he dashed past the tree the black potato flew out, and Dan plugged it.

"One," cried Fred Fee, grimly.

Dan wheeled around and rode back again.

"Ready!" shouted Joaquin.

This time it was the green potato, and Dan plugged it, Henry, Ike Knee and several others cheering.

Bill Lancaster and his sister stood watching proceedings, but they did not cheer.

The peeled potato and the red one shared the same fate.

Dan was standing true to his record.

Only the silver potato now remained.

"Ready!" cried Joaquin, and in Dan dashed.

What happened to cause it the boy could never tell, but at the very instant he fired the broncho took it into his head to buck.

Dan, clutching his rifle, went flying into the air. He landed head downward almost at the feet of Bill Lancaster and Miss Deacon.

"Oh, he's killed! He's dead!" screamed the girl.

"He plugged the silver potato all right," cried Ike Knee. "He has made no miss. He's the best shot that ever was in this hyar camp! By jinks, it's a blame shame!"

Dan lay there white and still.

Henry rushed to his side and bent over him.

"He hain't dead. He's only stunned," he declared. "Go on, Fred. Let's put this hyar business through, an' be done with it. It's been too long drawn out as it is."

Fred Fee was only too ready to assent, and the shooting proceeded.

The black, the white, the red and the green potatoes were each plugged in succession, but when it came to the silver potato, destined to be fatal to both, Fred Fee missed it by a hair's breadth.

The cheering of Henry and his friends made the very rocks ring.

"Three cheers for Little Dan Deadshot!" yelled Ike Knee. "Three cheers and a tiger for the crack shot of Wind River camp."

Again the cheering awoke the echoes, and this time Little Dan Deadshot, just coming to his senses, heard it.

He heard something else, too.

Bill Lancaster had undertaken to revive the boy, leaving Henry free to watch the shooting.

He had stripped open Dan's shirt, baring his breast, and the girl was bending down over him, too.

There was a blue and red star tattooed on Dan's breast.

Max Wittpen had several times told Dan that he did it when he was a very little fellow.

"You see, Bill?" Dan heard Lelia Deacon say.

"I see," breathed Bill Lancaster. "It's the boy, surest thing."

"You know the rest," said Lelia, in a hard voice.

"Yes, and I know the rest," said Bill. "He must die!"

CHAPTER X.

HENRY TAKES A HAND IN THE GAME.

Although Little Dan Deadshot had not opened his eyes as yet, he heard every word.

"Die! Why should he die?"

Why should Bill Lancaster and this beautiful but wicked girl wish to kill him, only a little insignificant dwarf, a Bowery waif, a mere nobody?

Dan could not understand it, but his heart sank, for he thought that Bill Lancaster intended to kill him then and there.

Meanwhile, Henry's friends were cheering for Little Dan Deadshot.

The match was over, and Henry had won his bet, which Fred Fee promptly paid.

Dan had fully revived, and managed to get on his feet.

His head was spinning, and he felt confused, but Bill Lancaster declared there was nothing serious the matter with him.

"That blamed broncho hain't fit for a little runt like him to ride," declared Ike Knee. "He hain't more'n half broke, anyhow. Wonder the boy wasn't killed!"

"Never mind, Dan," said Fred Fee, who was a whole-souled sort of fellow, and had but little jealousy in his make-up. "Give me your hand, boy. You are a wonder. Never seen such shooting from a tenderfoot, but I kin beat you yet. We'll have another try at it some of these days."

So everybody made much of Dan, and while they were talking Bill Lancaster and Lelia walked off together.

It would have been rather dangerous work for the leader of the Wind River gang to have tried to kill Little Dan Deadshot just then.

Henry took Dan down to the creek, and made him pull off his clothes and allow him to examine him all over.

"I can't find no bones broken," he declared. "Jump in and have a swim, boy. It will limber you up, and put you all right. Kin you swim, by the way?"

"Of course I can," replied Dan, "but my swimming has all been done in salt water. Max Wittpenn was a great fellow for swimming, and he taught me almost before I can remember."

"In with you, then," said Henry. "By the way, kid, how come that 'ar star tattooed on your breast?"

"Max did that, too," replied Dan. "And I want to tell you something about it now, while we are alone."

"Tell me while you are dressing," said Henry. "In with you now! I've got to go off with the boys this afternoon, and I'm in a hurry."

Dan jumped into the creek, and after swimming around a few minutes came out and began to dress.

Henry thought so little of what Dan said about the star that he did not even mention it, but he opened his eyes when Dan related the conversation he had overheard while Bill Lancaster supposed him to be lying unconscious on the ground.

"You don't mean to say that 'ar was their talk!" he exclaimed, first looking all around to see that no one was spying upon them. "Well, I'll be blamed!"

"That's just what they said," replied Dan. "I'm sure I don't

know what they meant. I can't imagine why anybody should want to kill me."

"Nor me, neither," replied Henry, "but Bill Lancaster is a sly fox. I always knowed he had lived a different life from this at some time or another. He's been a-talkin' an' a-hintin' about being heir to a big fortune this three years. The boys never thought thar was nothing into it until this old man and the gal turned up. B'gosh, he'll bear watchin'. Reckon as how I won't make the run with the boys this afternoon, Dan. I'm a-goin' to hang to the camp, and you stick right close to me."

The "run" was a cattle raid on a neighboring range for the purpose of stealing a few steers for provisions.

Bill Lancaster led the party, and just at nightfall they returned driving six fine steers.

They were promptly corraled, and one was slaughtered on the spot.

The best steaks were cut out of the carcass, dressed and cooked, and a feast followed.

There was no drinking done whatever.

Bill Lancaster never allowed that in the camp, but the "boys" had a jolly time of it just the same.

Supper over, three or four poker games were started.

Henry, however, did not go in for poker that evening; he retired to his hut early, and took Dan along with him.

"This boy has had a bad shaking up, and I want to nuss him a little," he declared. "Reckon you won't see nothing of us till to-morrow morning. He'll be all right then."

Bill Lancaster was with the gang when Henry made these remarks, and Dan noticed that his protector eyed him sharply, but the chief of the Wind River gang never even looked at him.

As soon as he and Henry were in the hut the latter shut the door, and put a bar across it, for there was no lock.

Henry then lifted an old lantern, and placing it on the table, sat down beside it.

"Boy, do you know what I'm a-thinking?" he said.

"I'm sure I don't, Henry," replied Dan.

"I'm a-thinking that you must be somebody."

"I expect I am," laughed Dan. "There isn't very much of me, to be sure, but I must have had a father and mother like other folks, I suppose."

"Naturally," said Henry, "and it's a gosh-blamed pity that you don't know who they were."

"I never shall know now, I guess."

"I'm not so sure of that. There's more ways nor one of skinning a cat. That thar half sister of Dan's is a cat, ef ever there was one. What we want to do is to cut the gang and find a liar, Dan."

"A what?" cried Dan. "Aren't there any liars in this camp?"

"Too durned many of the kind you mean, but none of the kind I mean," retorted Henry, unable to perceive the joke. "Kind I want is a feller what knows the law, and what I want him for is to look up your pedigree. Like enough this yore Max Wittpenn feller wasn't clean knocked out the night you were tellin' me about when Tombstone Tom got into that muss in his crib. The man could be writ to. He could be made to tell what he knows about you. I have my own ideas. I kin see through a brick when thar's a hole into it as well as the next feller. Ef it's a-going to pay Bill Lancaster and that she-cat to kill you, it's blamed likely it will pay you to keep alive, an' that's what I propose to help you to do."

"Henry, you are a true friend," said Dan. "I don't know much about the world, and I don't suppose I'm as bright as the average—"

"Yes, yer be," interrupted Henry. "Yer body may be small, but you have got the big head—leastways, I don't mean you've got the big head, but that your head is all right, and— Oh, gosh, I get all mixed up when I try to talk. You understand, Dan?"

"I understand that you are my friend, all right, and that's enough," said Dan. "I'll do whatever you say."

"Then go to bed," said Henry. "I'm going to sit hyar an' smoke an' think. By the time it comes morning I shall have got the hull business straightened out in my mind, but don't take your clothes off, boy."

Dan turned in, and was soon fast asleep.

Henry sat smoking his old clay pipe until he was sure that his charge was actually slumbering. Then he got up, unbarred the door, and stole out of the hut.

He was gone a long time. It was two o'clock in the morning when he came suddenly into the hut and slammed the door.

"Get up, Dan!" he cried, shaking the boy violently. "Get up, or we shall have to fight for it. They mean to do us both up this very night!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE MIDNIGHT ESCAPE.

Little Dan Deadshot sprang to his feet, and as he did so Henry jammed his hat over his eyes.

"We want to slide out of this," he said excitedly. "I've been playing Injun. I've heard! I know! Whar's my spare rifle? Ah! Here it is. Take it. Whar's that blamed old grip? Here you be. Stuff them clothes into it. I've got the horses ready. Gee whiz! Didn't think I could get so nervous, but when a feller has kids to look out for it makes a deuce of a difference. Ready, now? Yes, yes! Come on!"

They stole out of the hut together, slipping behind it.

"Dan, don't you hear them coming?" breathed Henry. "It's Bill and Joaquin, the Greaser! Oh, gee! Wouldn't I like to shoot 'em! But that would spile the game, an' get the hull camp by the ears."

Somebody was coming.

Dan had caught sight of two dark forms moving toward the hut, and he could hear the crunch of feet upon the sandy soil.

"We are just in time and no more," breathed Henry, as they came upon two bronchos hitched behind the hut. "Mount, Dan. It's my hoss this time, and he won't buck on you. I'll take yourn, and if he tries any of his games I'm good for him."

"Where do we go?" asked Dan, as Henry unhitched the horses.

"Never you mind. First thing is to get out of camp," was the reply. "Now, Dan, it has to be tech an' go. When they go into the hut we dash around it, and are off. Of course they'll fire, so you must crouch low, dig your heels into the hoss, and hold on tight ez shoemaker's wax. We shall have ten minutes' start, anyhow, and a hull lot of ground kin be covered in that time. Be you ready?"

"I am," said Dan.

"Listen! They are almost thar. Keerful, now! Keerful! Thar they go inside! Now, Dan! Now! Lay low!"

"Why, they are not here!" Bill Lancaster's voice was heard exclaiming. "What the deuce! Let 'em have it, Joaquin! Now! Now!"

Around the hut the bronchos came dashing, and away flew Henry and Dan like the wind.

Bill Lancaster's rifle cracked. Joaquin's caught the echo.

The shots flew around Dan in lively fashion, but the boy crouched low on the horse, and away they flew like the wind.

"Oh, wouldn't I like to give 'em just one," gasped Henry.

"I could do 'em in the dark!" cried Dan.

A sharp whistle rang out; then another and another.

"That's the signal for hosses," cried Henry. "We shall have the hull gang at our heels in a minute. Blamed lucky about that 'ar shooting-match. It taught you to ride. We'd be in the soup now only for that."

But there were better riders than himself in the gang, and better horses than he and Dan were now urging onward at all the speed they were capable of, and Henry knew it only too well.

"We have got the start, and that's the hull thing," he said. "Only question is kin we hold the lead?"

"Why should they do you?" Dan demanded. "They were riding side by side now."

"'Cause I'm a deserter," replied Henry, grimly.

"They will kill you?"

"Sure. We all had to swear to that when we joined the gang. Any man who goes back on Bill Lancaster dies."

"And won't they follow us up later?"

"Expect they will, boy, but what the blazes! Ef they kin shoot, so kin we."

"Henry, are they sure to do it?"

"Is the sun sure to rise? I've got to kill somebody before I git let alone on this deal."

"And you have done this on my account, Henry?"

"Waal, now, boy, I won't lie to yer. It hain't all on your account, though it is some. Of course I wasn't going to stand around and see you murdered in cold blood—no. But, then, I'm on the make, too, like the other men. I've been a-listening behind Bill Lancaster's hut to-night. I heard him and that she-coyote of a half-sister of his talkin'. Gee! what a lot of talk they made, too! Trouble was, they talked tenderfoot talk, which is a leetle too much for your uncle, unless he pays close attention, and I couldn't quite make out what it was all about."

"Was it about me, Henry?"

"About nobody else, boy. I couldn't get it quite straight,

as I told you, but the idea seems to be that you are some relation of theirs, and that you stand between 'em and this hyar fortune. Seems like that you were lost when you were a baby, an' that thar's a will, and it says something about that there star what's tattooed on your breast, and that things will go one way if you turn up an' another if you are turned down; but, say, it's all a mix-up, and I can't begin to give it to you straight."

"They are after us!" said Dan. "They have started now!"

"That's what they have," said Henry. "Waal, they've got to come sooner or later. Spur up, boy! We'll soon be at the mouth of the canyon. We'll give 'em a chase at all events."

The bucking broncho was too hard run to try any of his tricks now. They were soon in the canyon, and then the sounds behind them ceased to be heard.

"Have they gone back and given it up?" asked Dan.

"Not on your life!" replied Henry. "Them walls keep us from hearing. Just wait till they get into the canyon, and you will hear them plain enough."

And in a minute Dan could hear every hooffall.

It seemed as if the gang was close behind them.

"They are gaining onto us," said Henry. "They are nearer than I thought for."

"Henry! Henry! Oh, Henry!" a voice shouted behind them then.

"I hear yer, Bill!" yelled Henry. "Ef you have got anything to say, say it, for this here will be your last chance."

"It's the boy we want and not you!" came the answer. "Shoot him and I'll give you a thousand dollars, but don't let us come up with you if you want to live!"

"Go to blazes!" yelled Henry. "With Little Dan Deadshot to back me, ef you dare to come up with us thar'll be some one dead in this canyon besides him and me."

"That settles your case!" cried the voice. "You have had your last chance. I'll hunt you down and do you if I have to follow you to the end of the earth."

To this Henry made no reply, but only urged his horse on the faster.

They were making marvelous speed, but their pursuers were doing still better.

Louder and louder the clatter behind them fell upon Little Dan Deadshot's ears.

At last the shots began to fly.

"Not in range yet," said Henry, as the crack of the first rifle rang out.

"They will catch up with us sure, and they will kill us then!" cried Dan.

"Not on your life!" replied Henry. "Our hope lies right ahead of us now."

"What do you mean?"

"Thar you be, boy! Stick close to your saddle! Don't lose your head!"

A turn in the canyon had suddenly brought them upon one of those strange breaks in the mountain so common in Arizona.

It was a cross canyon.

It seemed to Dan as he looked up just as though some one had taken a huge axe and cut deep into the great rocky walls on either side of them.

The cross canyon was not over forty feet wide, and the depth below the trail was less than a hundred feet.

Across this break lay two tree-trunks, forming a rude bridge.

These, as Henry afterward explained, had been put there by Bill Lancaster, and through the canyon and over the bridge was the only way into the camp of the Wind River gang.

Dan's heart seemed to stand still as the broncho crossed the bridge.

He reined in then, for Henry had done the same and had dismounted.

"I'll give 'em something to do!" cried Dan's protector.

"It took a week to get them logs hyar," Henry continued. "It will take another to replace them. Who can say that we haven't got the start now?"

Seizing hold of the tree-trunks, he tumbled them into the cross canyon, springing into the saddle the instant the job was done.

"Now, Bill Lancaster, go to blazes and get the boy!" he bawled, for Bill at the head of his gang had just come in sight around the bend of the main canyon.

Throwing up his rifle and calling to Dan to do the same, both sent shots flying back at their pursuers.

What effect they had Dan got no chance to learn, for Henry instantly put the spurs to his broncho, and away they flew down a steep decline.

CHAPTER XII.

DAN WAKES UP THE JEWSHARP.

Keno, Arizona, is a tough town.

Tombstone may have been worse in its palmy days, but even Deming, New Mexico, once said to be the toughest town in the far West, could not hold a candle to Keno, for there were days in Deming when nobody was shot, and, indeed, even a whole week might slip by without a murder—but never at Keno. Oh, no!

One evening just at sundown, a few days after the escape of Henry and Little Dan Deadshot from the camp of the Wind River gang, there was a shooting in front of the Jewsharp, Billy Ricketts' famous faro joint, for, in spite of the name, it was faro and not keno which was the game most in favor in this tough town.

It was a quarrel over cards, and four men suddenly rushed out upon the street from the Jewsharp and began peppering away at each other just as a man dressed cowboy style and a queer little fellow, almost a dwarf, came riding into town.

Drunk these men must have been, for no damage was done, and the affair was brought to a sudden finish by the man and the little boy.

Everybody saw it done.

Both threw up their rifles and fired.

The two shots went through the hats of the two men on the side of the street nearest the Jewsharp.

"Let up, thar!" shouted the man. "We are the crack shots of Arizona! You kill Ike Duffett and we'll kill you!"

They had the drop on the four all right, for they were armed with rifles, while the quarrelsome gamblers had only revolvers.

"Gee whiz! It's Hen Holloway!" cried one of the men. "Boys, I say, let's call this off and chuck for the stakes. Hen's a dead shot, as you all know."

"So I be," shouted Henry—for, of course, it was Dan and his protector—"but this boy is deader. His name is Deadshot. Cut out that quarrel, now! Shake hands, or we'll blamed soon bring it to an end in a way what some one won't like."

Henry had won the day.

Chances were all four gamblers only wanted an excuse.

Shooting to settle card-quarrels was the custom at Keno.

In this case the rifles of Henry and Little Dan Deadshot proved ready arbitration, and in a minute all four were shaking hands.

"That's the talk," said Henry, riding up. "Ike, how are ye? Introduce your friends. Come, boys! Wait till I hitch the hosses, and we'll all go in and have a drink on this. Sorry I put a hole in your hat, neighbor, but it had to be did."

The horses were fastened to the hitching-bar in front of the Jewsharp, and all entered the saloon.

Introductions followed, and drinks followed the introductions. Dan, whose head hardly reached to the bar, drank only soda water. When Ike Duffett suggested that he try beer, Henry jumped on him "with both feet."

"Not on your life!" he said. "You jest leave that boy be. He's the crack shot of Arizona. I'll back him against the world."

"Is, hey?" said Tom Maloy, one of the men who would have killed Ike Duffett a few moments before. "Money talks. I've held that position myself. I'll back it now with a hundred."

"That would be robbery," said Henry. "I don't shoot for money when I've been lushing, but I'll back the boy on a different sort of bet."

"What's that?" demanded Ike Duffett.

Several rough miners, who had been lounging in the gambling room, to be plainly seen through the open doors behind the saloon, now came in, attracted by the loud talk, whereas when it was only an every-day shooting they had stuck behind the card tables and paid no attention at all.

"I'll let him shoot between my fingers at fifty yards to-morrow," said Henry, spreading out his big hand on the bar.

"What! that little runt?" laughed Tom Maloy. "I'm ready, but why not to-night?"

"Two hundred to one! I'll put up right now, but it has to be done in the daylight," Henry replied.

"I'll take you," said Tom Maloy, and the stakes were lodged with Billy Ricketts, who had been listening to all this.

More drinks followed, and any amount of talk.

Henry began to grow hilarious. He told how he had shaken the Wind River gang. He boasted that he would shoot Bill Lancaster on sight, and made a lot of foolish talk.

Twice Dan tried to get him away from the bar, and the second time he got a mild back-hander over the face for his pains.

"Shut up, kid! I'll look out for myself, and you, too!" said Henry, thickly, and then he shouted:

"Fifty to ten that he can put a bullet in the eagle's eye!"

"Take you!" cried Tom Maloy.

"Let her go, Dan!" shouted Henry.

The gambling room was fully a hundred feet long, and the saloon fifty more.

The eagle was at the further end of the former, secured high up against the wall.

Before any one had time to say another word, Dan threw up his rifle and fired.

"A miss!" shouted Tom Maloy.

"A hit!" bawled Henry.

"Put 'em out!" roared Billy Ricketts. "I won't have shooting in my place!"

Meanwhile the gamblers were dropping down under the tables, thinking a general shooting-match was in progress.

Billy Ricketts seized a revolver from the back bar, and covered Henry.

He would have fired, too, if Dan had not instantly covered him with his rifle.

"Hold on, mister. I've got the drop on you! Don't you shoot my best friend!" he cried.

"Let up, Dan! Bet goes to the house to pay for the eagle!" cried Henry. "Cut it out, Billy. I apologize. I only wanted to prove that this boy can shoot. By time, there's light enough here for the other bet. If you'll take it on the length of these two rooms, Tom Maloy, the kid shall put four shots between my fingers right now."

"Go yer," said Tom, and Billy Ricketts, who was not looking for trouble, which might have ended in the total destruction of his place, made no objections.

"It's all right, gentlemen!" he called to the frightened gamblers. "Only a little fun."

The four players took it in good part, and began guying Henry about his dwarf.

"Bet ten to one the shot isn't in the eagle's eye!" shouted a big miner.

"Make it a hundred to fifty on me!" yelled another.

Both bets were taken.

The idea caught the crowd.

Bets were being placed on all sides, while the bartender went for a stepladder to settle the question.

Even Billy Ricketts caught the spirit of the occasion and put a hundred on Dan against two hundred of one of the faro players who came out into the saloon.

"How is it, Charley?" he shouted, when the bartender got up to the eagle at last.

"Gents!" shouted the bartender, "I'm sorry for the losers, but this eagle hain't got but one eye."

"Hooray fer Little Dan Deadshot!" yelled Henry, tossing up his hat. "I'll back him against the world!"

CHAPTER XIII.

SHOOTING AT THE JEWSHARP.

Keno had an electric light plant of its own, or Little Dan Deadshot never could have done it.

The big arc light which hung down from the middle of the ceiling of the faro room helped him out.

Some objections were raised to the bartender's decision, but Billy Ricketts settled it by ordering the eagle taken down.

In the presence of all who could get near enough to see the operation, he opened the wood of the partition behind it, and Dan's bullet with the remains of the glass eye was found inside the board.

The bets were promptly paid—that was the way they did business in Keno.

The gamblers crowded about Dan, and had a lot to say about his shooting.

"Come, let up on the kid!" cried Henry. "I'm going to put up my hand for a mark now."

"Thought you said you wouldn't do it till to-morrow?" said Ike Duffett.

"Changed my mind, providing Billy will turn on all his lights," said Henry.

"I'll go you on that," said Billy Ricketts, flushed by his success; "but first let's all have a drink in honor of this auspicious occasion. It hain't often that we have a dwarf

tenderfoot who can wake up Keno in this syle, and something ought to be did. It's on the house, gentlemen! It's on the house!"

All gambling was now off for the time being.

The Keno miners, cowboys, card crooks and all the rest of the bunch which made the Jewsharp their nightly hang-out crowded to the bar.

It was all Billy and the bartender could do to put out the stuff fast enough for them.

Henry refused to drink with the rest. There was no shrewder man in the Jewsharp that night than Dan's protector. He knew when he had drank enough, and he knew, moreover, that he needed a steady hand to make the scheme he had undertaken a success.

Taking Dan aside, he asked him what he thought of it.

"You see that little stage at the end of the faro room," he said, drawing Dan toward the dividing doors. "Now, that's whar I propose to stand. Think you could put the bullets between my fingers in that light?"

This was a trick which Dan had been practising for the last two or three days with Henry. It was no matter of guess-work. All depended upon the light.

"I'll tell you, Henry," whispered Dan. "That bright light against the blue wall is confusing. You stand a little forward, so that the light will strike right down upon your hand, which you can just hold out straight, and I will shoot between the fingers. I'd rather you wouldn't put your hand up against the wall."

"All right," said Henry. "I'm with you there. I know ye, boy, and I know what ye can do. I'm not one bit afraid."

"You needn't be," said Dan, confidently. "Put up as much money as you like on me. I'm bound to win."

"It may cost me a finger if you don't."

"It's all right, Henry, providing you don't drink any more until after I shoot."

"Not another drop," replied Henry. "Trust me."

Henry now joined the group at the bar.

Bets were being freely placed with Billy Ricketts.

A good many of the gamblers looked upon the matter as a joke, but it was a novelty and a change from the everlasting round of faro and roulette.

While the betting was going on nobody paid much attention to Dan, who sat down beside a table in the corner all by himself.

There was one man in the Jewsharp, however, who had kept his eye on Dan from the first.

He was a seedy-looking individual, dressed in a well-worn suit of black, the coat being buttoned up under the chin in such a fashion as to suggest that its wearer was waiting for his shirt to come home from the laundry. He wore on his head a shabby plug hat, with the brim greasy and worn. We may add that his shoes would have looked better if the big toe on the left foot had not stuck out through the leather.

Certainly the man did not look to be in very flourishing circumstances when he sauntered up to the table and sat down opposite to Dan, bidding him good-evening in an exceedingly friendly way.

Dan, who had been brought up on the Bowery, had seen hundreds of his kind, of course, and he put him down as a deadbeat at once.

"Well, boy," said the seedy man, "they seem to be having a whole lot of excitement over you."

"Yes, sir," replied Dan, not at all desirous of talking.

Where had he seen this man before?

Now that he came to look at him, there was something very familiar about his face, and when he spoke his voice stirred Dan's memory, also.

"You shoot well, but that is no wonder," continued the seedy man. "You learned your business of a good master. Oh, yes, that is so."

"He's trying to draw me out," thought Dan, "but he shan't pump me. If he knows me he will let it out if I keep shy."

So instead of answering Dan said nothing at all.

"Isn't it so?" demanded the man, looking very hard at him.

"Yes, sir."

"No better shot in this country than Max Wittpenn when he is sober. Ha, ha, ha!"

"He knows me," thought Dan. "I wonder who he can be?"

"Isn't that so?" demanded the seedy man, when Dan still remained silent.

"Yes, sir."

"Boy, have you forgotten me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Come, now! You can talk fast enough if you want to."

I've heard you many a time. You see, I know that old shooting gallery on the Bowery, and——"

Here Henry shouted:

"Come, Dan, ready now!"

Dan, grasping his rifle, sprang up from the table.

The seedy man caught hold of his coat and held him back.

"Little Dan Deadshot, don't you be afraid of me," he whispered. "I'm the best friend you have got in Arizona to-day."

"I am afraid of you," retorted Dan. "I don't want nothing to do with you."

Pulling away, he joined Henry at the bar.

"Who is that old guy? What's he saying to you?" demanded Henry.

"Let up on it now. Wait till I get through shooting," replied Dan, in a low voice. "Better keep an eye on him, though, Henry, and you want to find out who he is, if you can."

"That's all right. Trust me," said Henry, taking one good long look at the seedy gentleman.

It seemed to make the man nervous.

He arose, pulled his coat straight, settled his shiny plug hat on the side of his head, and walked out of the Jewsharp.

"Who is that old cock, Billy?" demanded Henry.

"That's Lawyer Schuster," replied Billy Ricketts. "You hain't been much in Keno lately. Everybody knows him."

And Dan knew him now, but in his thoughts he called him by a different name.

"Lawyer Shyster," he said to himself. "Max Wittpenn's old friend. Well, well! To think that I should run up against him away out here in the West."

"Time!" cried Billy Ricketts. "Do we shoot, or don't we shoot? Time!"

"Ready!" said Henry, and walking through the gambling room he took his place on the stage.

It had been all arranged.

Dan was to stand just inside the outer door, and shoot the length of the saloon and the gambling room, too, a distance of about 150 feet. The Jewsharp was the longest building in town.

Behind Henry a white cloth had been hung against the wall, at Billy Ricketts' suggestion.

Upon this the shadow of Henry's hand was thrown.

Billy Ricketts, Tom Maloy, Ike Duffett and another took their places on each side of the stage to act as umpires.

"Now, gentlemen!" cried Billy Ricketts, "we are all ready. Henry will hold his hand still after the shooting so that we can see where the shots have struck in relation to the shadow of his fingers. Now, then, Tom Thumb, let her go!"

Dan stood by the door as cool as a cucumber.

Up went the rifle, and four shots rang out with scarcely two seconds between each one.

Wild cheers followed.

Henry stood motionless, holding his hand out.

Upon the white cloth between each of the great shadow fingers was a bullet-hole.

Little Dan Deadshot had won out again.

He was the hero of the hour.

The rough miners stood him on the bar and cheered him to the echo.

Henry set up the drinks for the entire crowd, and he could well afford to do so, seeing that he had won over four hundred dollars, as he afterward confessed to Dan.

The racket kept up nearly all night.

Dan finally fell asleep in the corner, and when Henry shook him up in the early morning, Dan found, to his dismay, that his friend was so drunk that he could scarcely stand on his feet.

"Come, Dan! Come! We must be getting out of this," he said, thickly. "I've lost every gosh-blamed cent."

Such was the life in Keno, Arizona, at the time Little Dan Deadshot struck the town.

CHAPTER XIV.

LAWYER SHUSTER.

Henry was certainly very drunk, but he knew exactly what he was about just the same.

Apparently he knew Keno pretty well, too.

He took Dan down to the Occidental Hotel, a perfect old "joint," and engaging a room tumbled on the bed with all his clothes on, boots in the bargain, leaving Dan to undress and crawl under the covers the best he could.

Under such circumstances there is little wonder that Dan could not sleep.

He was up soon after sunrise.

There was no water in the room to wash with—water is scarce around Keno—so Dan dressed himself and went downstairs to see if he could not find some.

The bartender told him that if he would go down the street a short distance he would find a beer-bottling place where they had an artesian well.

"That feller is mighty stingy with his water, but perhaps he might let you have enough to wash your face with, if you speak to him fair," he said.

"I guess I can fix him," replied Dan. "When are you going to have breakfast ready?"

"You can have yours any time," replied the bartender. "such as it is. Everything is scarce now around here. There hain't nothing in the house but ham and eggs, except a side of fresh pork, and we are keeping that for dinner."

Dan went away wondering, if the Occidental was the best hotel in Keno, as Henry declared it to be, what the others were like.

The bottling man proved to be obliging, and he let Dan wash his face at the bottle-wash tap.

On his way back to the hotel Dan saw coming toward him the seedy lawyer who had tried to pump him at the Jewsharp the night before.

He looked more seedy than ever by daylight, but he carried a light bamboo cane, and came strutting along with as many airs as though he had been the best-dressed man in Arizona.

"Ah! Little Dan Deadshot!" he exclaimed. "Well, well! This is surely an unexpected encounter! Do you know me, now that you have had time to think about our charming conversation last evening? Look sharp at me. Mark me well."

"If you meet the old fellow again, pump him and find out what he wants," had been Henry's order, so Dan was ready for the man now.

"Oh, yes, I know you," he replied. "You are Lawyer Shyster, Max Wittpenn's friend."

The lawyer frowned.

"Now, look here, Dan!" he exclaimed. "Max Wittpenn is a dough-headed Dutchman, and never could get the Dutch twist of his tongue. Schuster is my name—Schuster! Say it!"

"Schoyster!" said Dan, giving the letters the German sound.

"No, no, no!" cried the lawyer, rapping his cane on the ground. "S-c-h-u-s, Schus, t-e-r, ter! Schuster! Can't you say that?"

"I suppose I could if I tried very hard," replied Dan, "but what do you want with me?"

"I would like to know how you came to Arizona?"

"Came on a train."

"I didn't suppose you walked or rode all the way from the Bowery on a bike. Don't be sassy, boy."

"I don't intend to be, sir."

"But you are. Let me give you a word of advice. Never judge a man by the shabbiness of his clothes. Just now I am up against hard luck, but all the same I am a right smart lawyer, and know my business, Dan."

"I'm not saying that you don't, sir. Max once told me that you were a judge."

"Well, that is not true. I claim no honors except such as justly belong to me."

"Of whisky, I was going to say," added Dan.

"Now there you go again! You think it is going to pay you to guy me?" cried Lawyer Schuster. "Well, let me tell you, boy, you are greatly mistaken. I have drank whisky—enough to float a ship. I admit it. I am not drinking it now, because I haven't the price, but I have something else, Dan."

"What is that, sir?"

"A letter from Max Wittpenn telling me to look out for you."

"Is that so?"

"It is. He says in the letter if I run across you out here to hold on to you and let him know. He says there is big money in holding on to you, Dan."

Dan's eyes began to open.

"Max knows all about me, I suppose," he replied. "He knows I can shoot. There was big money changing hands at the Jewsharp last night on account of me."

"He doesn't mean that at all," replied Lawyer Schuster, "and I know just what he does mean. Moreover, I'm the only man in Arizona who does know, and I haven't the remotest idea of sending for Max—know why, Dan?"

"No."

"Because," said Lawyer Schuster, tapping Dan on the shoulder with his stick, "because I am firmly convinced that you and I can take care of all the money that's lying around loose, Dan."

Dan began to look at Lawyer Schuster in a little different light.

The pumping process had panned out much better than he expected it would.

"Do you really mean that you know who my father and mother were?" demanded Dan.

"That is just what I do know," replied the lawyer. "Exactly that, and it is what you don't know, Dan."

"And—and is there money coming to me?" demanded Dan, growing more and more excited.

Lawyer Schuster threw up his cane.

"Hear the boy talk!" he exclaimed. "Is there money coming to him? Well, I should smile!"

"How much?" demanded Dan, eagerly.

"How much is five times one, Dan?"

"Five, of course?"

"Make it millions, boy!"

"Do you mean to say——"

"Oh, yes, I mean to say! I know what I am talking about, and Max Wittpenn knew on which side his bread was buttered when he held fast to you; he never treated you badly, did he, Dan?"

"Well, he treated me as well as he knew how, I suppose. He used to beat me with a strap."

"And that is all you could expect. Oh, I know, Dan. I know all about it. Max and I talked it all over many a time."

"What's the use of beating about the bush, Mr. Schuster? Why don't you tell me what you know?"

"Do you think I am a fool?" cried the lawyer. "If you knew as much as I know, what use would I be to you? Be sensible, Dan."

"I don't know how we are going to get at it, then. Am I anything to a man named J. Hancock Deacon?"

"What do you know about J. Hancock Deacon?" demanded the lawyer, fiercely, and he caught Dan by the arm as he spoke.

"I have seen him. I know that he is dead."

Lawyer Schuster whistled.

"Dead!" he cried. "Dead, eh? Can you prove that he is dead?"

"Of course I can. I attended his funeral. I saw him put in the grave."

"Then, upon my word, there are hot times ahead of us! I have been telegraphing all over Arizona trying to locate you and J. Hancock Deacon. Now I run across you by accident, and you tell me this most welcome piece of news. J. Hancock Deacon dead! Hooray for Little Dan Deadshot! Hip, hip, hooray!"

And Lawyer Schuster, pulling off his battered tile, waved it in the air as he cheered.

"You had better come with me and see Henry," cried Dan. "He will put you straight on all this."

"Shan't do anything of the sort," replied Lawyer Schuster, again seizing Dan's arm. To Halifax with Henry! You keep next to me, Dan, and I'll make you a multi-millionaire!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE ATTACK ON KENO.

If Dan had not had so many hints at this business before he would undoubtedly have become a good deal excited over the revelations of Lawyer Schuster, unsatisfactory as they were, but as he already had it pretty firmly fixed in his mind that somewhere or another there was a whole lot of money lying around loose waiting for him to claim it he kept cool enough.

"You let go of me!" he exclaimed. "I'm traveling with Henry now, and I won't do a thing unless he says so; there's no use trying to make me, Mr. Schuster, so you had better not try."

Lawyer Schuster looked disgusted.

"You're a little fool, Dan."

"Don't you call me a fool. I won't stand for it!"

"What—what! You little grasshopper! What can you do, whatever I want to call you?"

"I can shoot."

"Don't you threaten me, boy."

"Don't you try to bulldoze me, man. I'm stopping at the

Occidental Hotel with Henry. If you want to talk business you will have to come there."

Lawyer Schuster hauled in his horns.

"Well, you seem to be too many for me," he said. "I suppose I shall have to do as you say; but, tell me, when did this man Deacon die?"

"I won't tell you a thing about it until I have had a chance to talk with Henry," replied Dan, sturdily. "Good-day, Mr. Schuster. You have my address, so you had better call around."

Pulling away from the lawyer then, Dan hurried back to the hotel and told Henry all that had occurred.

The outlaw listened with deep attention.

"It is just as I supposed, Dan," he said. "There is a whole lot in this business. If there hadn't been Bill Lancaster would not have been so keen to kill you. I brought you here to Keno on purpose to consult a lawyer, and I don't see why this one who knows so much won't do as well as another who don't."

"But he drinks," said Dan.

"So do I," said Henry. "So will you some of these days, like enough. As to dividing with him, that's all nonsense. He'll get his pay for whatever he does, and as for me, if you want to give me a bone out of this stake I shan't kick, but what's coming to you is yours, and that's all there is about it. After breakfast we will look this fellow up and see how he stands."

Henry's idea of looking up Lawyer Schuster was to go to the Jewsharp and ask Billy Ricketts what he knew about him.

"He's a fraud," said the gambler, promptly. "He'd steal the pennies off a dead man's eyes, but all the same he is sharp enough, and understands law right down to the ground—but why do you want to know?"

"Oh, I've got a claim I'm looking into," replied Henry, evasively.

Billy Ricketts thought that he meant a mining claim, of course, and Henry let it go at that without further enlightening him.

Putting away a huge drink of whisky, Henry started out to look for the lawyer, but he was not to be found anywhere about town.

This was discouraging.

Billy Ricketts had made the statement that Lawyer Schuster's office was in his hat, but as Henry could not discover the battered plug, he found himself all at sea, and wound up by returning to the Jewsharp, where he sat down to wait, hoping that the lawyer would drop in.

The morning wore away, however, and he did not appear.

By this time Henry, who had engaged in numerous discussions about Dan's shooting at the bar, was pretty well loaded up with bad whisky again.

Another trial of Dan's skill with the rifle was arranged for that afternoon, and bets were made, but it was harder to find takers against Dan than it had been the night before.

There were some who were willing to back a certain Bill Smith, who was to be brought from somewhere, and there was a lot of boasting on both sides, which was in full progress, when suddenly Ike Duffett came bounding into the saloon.

"Look out! Big gang coming down the hill!" he shouted. "There's trouble in the wind."

The men at the bar of the Jewsharp were thrown into the greatest excitement.

"Clear the decks!" cried Billy Ricketts. "This place closes right now, gentlemen! Lively! Lively! I can't afford to be cleaned out here."

Nobody wanted him to be, for Billy was decidedly a popular character in Keno.

All hands rushed out on the street, and the door of the Jewsharp was promptly locked and the shades pulled down.

Dan could see a band of at least twenty mounted men dashing down the hill behind the town.

They were still at least two miles away, but in the clear atmosphere of Arizona one can see for a long distance, and there are no trees to break the view.

"Can it be Bill Lancaster, Henry?" demanded Dan.

"Don't think so," replied Henry. "Still it might be. My idea, however, is that they are Tombstone Tom's crowd."

"A bad gang?"

"The toughest kind."

"Do we stop here? Are we in on this?"

If Henry had been sober he probably would have said no, but as it was he swore he would never desert his friends.

The whole town was aroused by this time. Stores were closed, and the bank barred its doors.

Every one armed themselves who were not already armed, and a big crowd gathered in the "Miner's Exchange," a tough joint further down the street.

When the mounted men struck the head of Main street there was not a soul to be seen anywhere, but Keno was fully on the alert just the same.

"That's Lime Siler!" cried Henry, peering through the side window of the Exchange. "It's Tombstone Tom's gang all right. Boys, shall we go out and face them right now?"

"Better wait and find out what they want first," replied Ike Duffett. "There's a good big crowd of them. I'm not running my head into no hornet's nest unless I have to, you bet!"

"It's the bank, of course," said Tom Maloy, as the mounted men rounded up in front of the little one-story brick building where the solid men of Keno kept their cash.

Instantly all hands threw up their rifles and fired into the air.

This was a challenge, and was done to show the watchers that the gang meant business, but it was not the bank they were aiming at, after all, as Henry was soon to learn.

The gang rode on slowly after the volley was fired.

They looked at the closed front of the Jewsharp, and pushed ahead to the Miner's Exchange, where they halted again.

"It's up to us, fellows!" cried Henry. "We shall have to make a move."

"Look! Look!" whispered Dan, pulling Henry's coat-tail. "There's Lawyer Schuster with them. He is the one who has brought them into town."

"Surest thing!" gasped Henry. "Gee, don't I wish I was sober! Look out you don't shoot the old feller, Dan. We don't want him to die till we find out what he knows."

Lime Siler, a huge specimen of the Arizona "bad man," now put his hand against his mouth, and shouted:

"We want Hen Holloway! Is he hyar?"

"It's up to me, fellers," gasped Henry. "It hain't me, though. It's this hyar boy they are after. What's to be the reply?"

"We'll stand by you, Hen!" they shouted.

"Then at 'em!" cried Henry, throwing open the door of the Exchange.

Out they rushed onto the street, firing as they went.

Little Dan Deadshot took deliberate aim at Lime Siler, for the answering shots were already flying.

The big "bad man" gave a yell, and falling back, slipped from his horse.

CHAPTER XVI.

EVERYBODY AFTER DAN.

The fall of Lime Siler, who was shot in the arm, seemed to arouse the ire of the Tombstone gang.

"Wipe 'em out! Wipe 'em out!" yelled a big cowboy, his voice scarcely audible above the crack of the rifles and the wild shouts of his companions and of the Keno gang.

"Don't shoot the boy!" bawled Lawyer Schuster. "Whatever you do, don't kill the boy!"

The fight which followed was one such as the city boy was likely to remember for the rest of his life.

Rifles and revolvers were cracking on all sides, and right in the thick of it stood Little Dan Deadshot blazing away, seeming oblivious of fear.

The Tombstone gang were too many for the Keno crowd, however.

In a minute they had them on the run.

Tom Maloy fell dead.

Henry keeled over, and Dan rushed to his side, thinking that he was dead, too.

"Inside with you, boy!" panted Henry. "I've got one in the leg. I'm a goner, I guess! Save yourself, Dan!"

"Henry, I won't leave you!" cried Dan, courageously. "You have been good to me, and I'll stand by you to the last."

He seized the burly outlaw by the shoulders and tried to drag him into the Miner's Exchange.

"Go! Go!" gasped Henry. "Gee! If I could only have lived to see you come into your good fortune, boy!"

Poor Dan!

He came straight into his bad fortune, and it struck him at that very moment.

Somebody threw a lariat.

It dropped around Dan's neck, tightened, and the plucky little fellow was jerked from his feet.

A big cowboy, acting under Lawyer Schuster's instructions, had got him, and the next thing Dan knew he was dragged to the fellow's horse and lifted into the saddle.

Dan gasped and gurgled, and got black in the face.

"That's right!" cried Schuster. "Hold on to him, Dick! Shoot him if he makes any fuss. You understand!"

Lawyer Schuster had changed his tune, Dan thought.

He was so confused that he did not stop to think that this was mere bluff and only intended to scare him.

The Kenoites had all retreated now.

The Tombstone gang had practically captured the town.

Lime Siler, though badly wounded by Dan's bullet, was not out of business by any means.

"We go for the bank, boys!" he cried. "May as well make a clean sweep of it. Schuster, you and Dick Waffles will have to look after the kid the best you can."

"Tie him up! Tie him up!" cried the lawyer. "He is worth fifty times as much to us as you will ever get out of the Keno bank."

Dan was in for it, and simply had to submit.

His rifle was on the ground near where Henry lay so still and silent that Dan thought he must be dead.

Dick Waffles dismounted, tied the boy's hands behind him, and tied his legs to the saddle.

Then backing the horse further along the street, and followed by the lawyer, he stood guard with his rifle ready in case of an attack.

While this was going on Lime Siler got one of the gang to tie up his wounded arm, and led the way to the bank.

Dan saw them batter in the door, and then the cry went up that the cashier had locked the safe and escaped by the rear.

A long discussion followed.

Dan was too far away to hear what was being said.

"Are they going to blow up the safe, Dick?" Lawyer Schuster asked.

"Reckon they can't. Hain't got nothing to blow her with," drawled Dick.

"Wish to gracious they'd hurry up, then, and get out of town," growled the lawyer. "Dan, why don't you say something? What do you sit there glaring at me for?"

"What do you want me to say?" retorted Dan. "You have made a big mistake, Mr. Shyster."

"Don't you call me Shyster, or, by thunder, I'll bore a hole in you!" snarled the lawyer. "What do you mean by saying I have made a mistake?"

"You have killed my only friend," said Dan, bitterly. "He was coming to you to find out what you know, and to let you take charge of my case if there is anything in it. You didn't have to bring this gang here to clean out the town just to get hold of me, if that is what you did it for, and I believe it is."

"Oh, you shut up!" growled Schuster. "Your friend Henry isn't in this deal, and never will be now. You're a fool!"

"Am I?" replied Dan. "First you tell me to talk, and then you tell me to shut up. The last is easiest, and that's what I'll do, I guess."

Just then a loud shout rang out.

"Look! Look! A gang coming down the hill!" some one cried.

A few moments of immense confusion followed.

Then somebody called out that it was Bill Lancaster and the Wind River gang.

Dan was ready to believe it.

He could see a number of mounted men descending the hill, and with them was a woman.

"Everybody is after me," thought Dan. "What on earth can it all mean?"

There was a brief discussion by the bank, and then all hands mounted.

Evidently the Tombstone gang did not care to encounter the Wind River gang.

Somebody helped Lime Siler into the saddle, and as he grasped the bridle with his left hand he shouted:

"Now, then, boys, the game is up here. That safe is one too many for us! We'll have to come back and tackle it some other time. Forward! Let her go!"

Dick Waffles sprang to the saddle behind Dan, and away they went, dashing out of town in the wake of the gang, closely followed by Lawyer Schuster, who, being a poor rider, clung desperately to the broncho, bobbing up and down in the most uncomfortable style.

Instead of returning by the way they had come, which would have taken them back up the hill behind Keno and

toward the Wind River gang, Lime Siler led them straight for the mountains, which were not more than four miles away.

They were not pursued.

Looking back, they could see the Wind River gang riding down into the town, but they did not appear again at the other end of the main street.

Lime Siler rode up alongside of Dick Waffles and Dan.

"Well, Schuster, is this the boy?" he demanded.

"That's the boy," replied the lawyer, making a desperate effort to ride his horse up.

"I wonder if he knows it was I who shot him?" thought Dan.

Luckily for our city boy, Lime Siler had not the faintest idea who it was who had put the bullet into his arm.

"There hain't much to him," said Siler; "but, then, I didn't expect there would be, seeing what Tom wrote me about him. Look up, you little gopher! Tell me what happened to my friend Tom."

"Do you mean Tombstone Tom?" asked Dan.

"Of course I do. You are the lad he picked up in New York, hain't you?"

"I am."

"What's your name?"

"Dan Deadshot."

"Rats! Cut it out! Your real name, I mean. I want to see whether our shystering friend has been lying to me or not."

Before Dan could answer, one of the band, who had been left behind to find out just what gang it was that had struck into Keno, came tearing up.

"It's the Wind Rivers, Lime!" he shouted, "and they will be following us up. They are after that kid, and I heard Bill Lancaster say that he would get him if he had to shoot us off to the last man."

CHAPTER XVII.

IN THE HANDS OF A BAD GANG.

Lime Siler took the announcement of his scout coolly enough.

"That's all right," he said. "I believe on my own soul that Bill Lancaster shot Tom, and that's enough. I'll carve his heart out, if it takes a year to get there. Boy, am I right or wrong? Why don't you answer my question?"

"What question," demanded Dan.

"What question? Who killed my friend Tombstone Tom?"

"I don't know for sure. It wasn't Bill Lancaster, though. He hadn't come then."

"Wasn't he shot in the hold-up at the junction?"

"Yes, sir."

"Weren't you there? I was told you were."

"I was there."

"Did you shoot him? Tom wrote me that you were a deuce of a hand with the rifle."

"No, I didn't shoot him."

"Then who did?"

"Somebody in one of the berths."

He had to thank Lawyer Schuster for turning the conversation then.

"You asked the boy for his true name, and he has given you the only name he knows anything about. What I told you is the truth, Lime Siler. You can poke fun at me all you like, but if you don't listen to this scheme of mine you will make the biggest blunder you ever made since the day you were born."

"So you say. Doesn't the boy know anything about himself?"

"Nothing whatever. Let me question him. I know where you have been, and where J. Hancock Deacon died. It was with the Wind River gang. Isn't it so?"

"So you say," replied Dan, repeating Lime Siler's words.

"Now, boy, look here; this is all for your own good," he said; "and you can't do better than to tie to me. I don't know how much Max Wittpenn ever told you about yourself, but you are heir to a large estate, now that J. Hancock Deacon is dead."

"Say," put in Siler, "I know something. Bill Lancaster's true name is Bill Deacon; he told me that once."

"Of course it is," replied Schuster. "With this boy dead Bill comes in for the Deacon millions. You were in the Wind River camp, Dan?"

"Yes, I was," he replied.

"Did Bill tell you anything?"

"No; he tried to kill me, though."

"Ah! I thought so. That is why you skipped out along with your friend Henry?"

"Yes."

"There was a woman with the gang. Who is she?"

"Bill Lancaster's sister."

"Yes, yes! Lelia Deacon."

"That is her name."

"How did she get there?"

"They were on the train which was held up—she and her father, I mean. They went up to the camp with Bill Lancaster. The old man died there."

"I see. How much do you know about this Deacon affair?"

"Well, I'll be honest with you, Mr. Schuster. I don't know any more than you do, and probably not as much. Henry overheard some things that were said, but he didn't get them very straight. There is money coming to me which will go to them after I am dead. That's about all I know."

"You have said enough to interest me," broke in Lime Siler. "If I can block Bill Lancaster's game, I'll do it, you bet!"

"Then that is what you can, if you will only tie to me," said the lawyer. "That's the surest thing, Lime Siler. I'm giving it to you straight."

"I'm with you," replied the outlaw. "Where is this property located?"

"In Boston, and right here in Arizona."

"Whereabouts in Arizona?"

"In Tucson. Old Mrs. Deacon, this boy's grandmother, owns two or three blocks in that town."

Here the conversation ended.

Lawyer Schuster never opened his mouth during the rest of the journey except to answer questions.

Little Dan Deadshot, who never did much talking, kept silent, too, but he did a lot of thinking just the same.

They had reached the outlaws' camp, and here Dan remained for several days without having anything unusual happen to him, and hearing no more about the wonderful fortune from the lawyer, who held many long conversations with Lime Siler, but seldom spoke to Dan.

They seemed unable to come to terms, but more than once Dan thought they were going to come to blows.

Everybody made a pet of Dan.

Lime Siler became deeply interested in the boy, and was almost as friendly as Henry had been.

One night a man was shot dead in the hut where he was trying to sleep during one of these quarrels.

He was one of the worst of the lot, but when the murderer and his companions picked up the body and just threw it out of the hut, and then returned to their cards and went right on with their game as though nothing had happened, it was a little too much for our city boy.

"I'm going to run away," thought Dan then. "I'm going to get out of here this very night."

He thought it all over as he lay in the bunk, pretending to sleep.

The game continued until far into the morning, but at last it was over, and the two men who occupied the hut with Dan had turned into their bunks and the others were gone.

Both of Dan's companions were so full of whisky that they fell asleep the instant they lay down.

Dan waited a few minutes until he was sure that they were really unconscious, and then getting up he put on his clothes, took a rifle from the corner, and stole out under the stars.

"If I can only get a horse, I'll shake these fellows forever," he thought, and grasping his rifle he moved toward the corral, when all at once his foot struck something which made him draw back with a shudder.

It was the dead man.

Dan had run right against him while looking up at the stars.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GIANT RIDER OF THE CANYON.

It was an awful sensation.

Dan was not used to the ways of the Wild West, and he drew back, half sick with horror, and ran at full speed toward the corral.

Everything depended upon getting a horse promptly, but in this Dan was doomed to disappointment, for the padlock was there all right, and to climb over the barbed wire was impossible.

Terribly disappointed, Dan stood leaning against the gate, wondering what he ought to do, when all at once he heard the

clatter of hoofs, and saw a mounted man suddenly emerge from the mouth of the canyon where it entered the valley.

"Here's trouble," thought Dan. "I'll bet a dollar that's Bill Lancaster's gang coming after me."

He waited for an instant, and saw that the man was quite alone.

As the rider drew nearer Dan recognized him as the man who had been left behind at Keno to find out Bill Lancaster's plans.

His name was Jack Barber, and although he had come with Lime Siler to the camp, after joining the band on the road, he soon went away again, and from that time Dan had seen nothing of him till now.

Jack Barber rode directly up to Lime Siler's hut, which the leader of the band occupied alone, and dropping from the saddle, put his fingers in his mouth and gave a shrill whistle, repeating it three times.

In a moment a light appeared in the window of the hut, and then the door was opened by Siler, and Jack Barber passed inside.

"I'll bet a dollar it's something about my affairs he has got to tell," thought Dan. "He has been playing spy again surest thing. I must find out what this means."

He stole toward the hut, and stood under the window, which was open, the night being very warm.

"You are sure of it, Jack," were the first words he heard Siler say.

"Course I am," was the reply. "It's a sure go if we can get it. I worked in with the telegraph operator at Alabata, I tell you, and I promised him a big bone if he would help me. I stopped with him two days, and all that time he has been listening to the messages going over the wires; at last he got what we wanted. There will be fifty thousand dollars on the 'Frisco flyer, and only one man in the express car. It's our game, Sile. If we can make this haul we can cut stakes and get out of this with a **graft** which will last us for one while."

"It's a go. What time is the 'Frisco flyer due at Alabata?"

"Nine o'clock to-morrow morning."

"If we start in an hour it will be time enough."

"What about the boy?"

"Nothing doing yet. I don't trust myself in Tucson. It's too risky."

"Schuster still here?"

"Yes. I've been holding on to him, hoping to think up some way. S'pose you go to Tucson with him and the boy? There's no warrant out against you, and there is against me."

"Well, I'm willing, after we get through with this job. Do you think there is anything in it?"

"I'm blamed sure there is, if we can only get down to it, but you see it's likely to be a long-winded affair, and—"

"And so is this everlasting talk," thought Dan, under the window. "I'm off. By thunder, I'm going to start in business for myself. I'll knock their game or know the reason why. If I can save the 'Frisco flyer from being held up perhaps the express agent will let me ride to Tucson for nothing; once there, I'll look up some respectable lawyer and tell him the whole story. If there really is a fortune coming to me there ought not to be any great trouble in finding it out."

Hurrying to where the horse was quietly cropping the grass, he managed to climb into the saddle, and away he flew toward the mouth of the canyon.

Entering the canyon, he rode on for a good half hour, when all at once he met with an adventure which he was likely to remember to his dying day.

The canyon at his point was very narrow, and the walls arose absolutely perpendicular to a height of nearly a thousand feet.

The moon had now risen, and just at this time it came into view over the top of the canyon.

As the light streamed down between those towering walls Dan's heart almost stood still, for there ahead of him he could see a gigantic horse with a rider as tall as a steeple mounted upon his back.

It was wonderfully distinct.

The total height of horse and rider was at least fifty feet.

Dan reined in, trembling all over.

"For heaven sake, what does this mean?" he gasped.

As he pronounced the words the phantom vanished, leaving Little Dan Deadshot lost in wonder.

"It can't be my own shadow," he thought, "for there it is on the rocks. What on earth can it be?"

After pondering for some little time without being able to come to any solution of the mystery, Dan started again, but

before he had gone ten feet there was the gigantic horse-man once more.

There was no movement to the appearance.

The phantom horse stood motionless, and the rider's back was turned toward Dan.

"By gracious, I'll know what it means!" vowed Dan, plucking up courage.

He halted again, threw up his rifle, and fired at the giant figure.

Following close upon the shot a wild yell rang out through the canyon, and away flew the giant rider like mad.

CHAPTER XIX.

A ROUGH TIME AT RINGAL.

"Hold on, there!" shouted Dan, digging his heels in his horse's flanks. "Hold on! Who are you?"

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" yelled a voice, which Dan instantly recognized as Lawyer Schuster's. "I know your voice, Little Dan Deadshot. Don't shoot! It's only me!"

Then the gigantic rider wheeled his horse about and faced Dan, and two enormously long arms went up into the air.

"All shadows!" thought Dan. "What a fool I have been!"

Even yet he could not see the lawyer, but only the gigantic shadow between the walls of the canyon.

But as he rode forward he caught sight of him on his horse right ahead, and at the same instant the giant shadow disappeared.

"Dan, what on earth brought you here?" the lawyer asked. "I thought you were sound asleep in your bunk in Dick Waffles' hut."

"You see I'm not, Mr. Schuster?"

"By Jove, then you came very near putting me out of business. You are very handy with your rifle, boy."

"That's what they say," replied Dan. "You don't know how you looked to me when I was back there; you wouldn't wonder that I shot at you if you did."

"I can imagine. Didn't you know that this place is called Shadow Canyon? When the moon is full the most wonderful enlarged shadows that exist in all the world are thrown here."

The mystery was explained.

Ashamed of his foolishness, Little Dan Deadshot rode on at the lawyer's side in silence, and for a short time neither spoke.

The lawyer began at last.

"Running away, Dan?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," replied Dan, wondering what Schuster would propose to do about it.

"So am I, between ourselves. I think we had better go a bit faster. We may be chased."

It was not until they were clear of the mountains and out upon the open plain that either said another word.

"What are you running away for, Dan?" asked Schuster then, as though they had been talking right along.

"Because I am tired of staying with those fellows."

"Same here. They are no good. There is nothing in them."

Dan had come to the conclusion that he had better take Lawyer Schuster into his confidence, and he went on and told of the plot he had overheard.

Schuster grew greatly excited.

"The scoundrels!" he exclaimed. "That's the sort they are! Of course I knew it, but—well, the fact is, Dan, I only tied to them on your account. I haven't got a cent to my name, and I wanted to get to Tucson to look after that business of yours. I thought I could persuade Lime Siler to stake me, but it's all talk and no cider with that fellow. He'll never do anything, and I'm tired of waiting."

"He don't dare to go to Tucson. I heard him say so," said Dan.

"I know. There is a warrant out against him there. Now, your sharp ears have won out, and this is our chance. You haven't any money, I suppose, Dan?"

"Not a cent, sir."

"As I thought, we are both equally impecunious, and until our impecuniosity can be overcome there will be nothing doing. Leave all this business to me, Dan. We will save the 'Frisco flyer, and having done so the least the conductor can do will be to pass us along to Tucson. Once there, you will see what will happen, if you will only put your affairs in my hands."

"You seem to have taken them in your hands already," said Dan. "You appear to know all about me and my affairs. If you can make any money out of my affairs, and will give me some of it, I don't care what you do."

"Enough said. Only trouble is, it takes money to make

money. After we finish at Tucson we shall have to go East. Where is the money coming from?"

"I can shoot."

"That's what you can. I never saw such a dead shot, man or boy; but what has that got to do with getting East?"

"You might get up a shooting match and win money enough on me to pay our fares."

"By Jove, you have got a long head, boy. I never thought of it. The very thing. But let's get on. Our first business is to save the 'Frisco flyer."

"How far is it to Alabata?"

"About fifteen miles, but we don't go there, of course."

"Why not?"

"Do we want to come up against that rascally station agent? That won't pay."

"Where shall we go, then?"

"To Ringal, first station east of Alabata. That's our only chance."

In the clear atmosphere of Arizona one can see for a great distance, and before they reached the railroad Dan caught sight of a band of mounted men far to the westward.

At half-past eight they rode into Ringal, and it cannot be denied that they were a sorry looking pair.

Making their horses fast to the hitching bar behind the station, Dan and the lawyer went inside.

It had been agreed between them that Lawyer Schuster should do the talking, and Dan was glad it was to be so when he saw the agent, for a surlier and more disagreeable person he had never struck.

"What do you want?" he demanded, as Dan and his lawyer approached the little grated window of the ticket office.

"My friend," began Schuster, "I am here on important business. I am——"

"Get out!" he cried. "Get out of here right now!"

Dan slipped out. He had his reasons for so doing, as will be presently shown.

"You're a fool!" shouted Schuster, losing his temper. "The Tombstone gang mean to take the 'Frisco flyer! We are here to warn you, and——"

Dan heard this, and the next he knew Lawyer Schuster came out of the station door with coat-tails flying, for the agent had whipped out a revolver and covered him.

"Hold on, there!" he shouted. "Hold on, or I'll fire! Tell what you know!"

"Go to blazes!" cried Dan, starting his horse.

Away they dashed down the road, which ran parallel to the track.

A shot came whizzing after them, but missed.

Dan saw men running out of the saloon to see what it was all about.

"Go on! Don't stop on any account!" he cried.

Then turning in the saddle, he threw up his rifle and fired, exclaiming as he did so:

"I'll show him what shooting is."

The ball went through the station agent's hat, taking it off his head.

That ended it.

Dan and his lawyer were soon out of range, and no one attempted to follow them.

CHAPTER XX.

THE ATTACK ON THE 'FRISCO FLYER.

"Dan, we are in the soup," remarked Lawyer Schuster, when at last it seemed safe to slacken speed.

"Don't see it," said Dan. "You didn't go at the man right, that's all."

"How would you have gone at him, if you please?"

"I would have come right to the point at once, and not put on any frills. You seem to forget that we not only look like tramps, but that is exactly what we are."

"Tramps don't ride on horses."

"Say, tramps sometimes steal horses, and that's the way we got ours, I guess."

"There will be no train robbery if I can help it."

"You'll have to make a move mighty quick, then. It was half-past eight by the station clock when we went in there; it is getting on towards nine now, and that is the time the train is due at Alabata."

"I'm ready," said Dan. "We stop right here."

A whistle was heard in the distance, and a line of smoke was seen against the sky.

"She's a-coming!" cried the lawyer. "If you expect to do business you will have to get a move on, Dan."

Dan vaulted from the saddle.

"Can you hobble the horses?" he asked.

"Sure," replied Schuster, awkwardly dismounting.

"Do it, then. I'll stop the train."

Thus saying, Dan pulled a red flag out from under his vest. He unrolled the flag, and planting himself alongside the track began to wave. The train was now rapidly approaching. Dan could see the engineer leaning out of the cab window, and he knew that his signal must have been seen. In a moment there was a prolonged whistle. Dan did not understand railroad talk, and only waved his flag more vigorously. Almost instantly he knew that he had accomplished his purpose, for the train began to slow down, stopping finally right abreast of where they stood.

"What's the matter?" demanded the engineer.

"The Tombstone gang is after your train," cried Dan. "They mean to take it at Alabata. We tried to make the agent at Ringal listen to us, but he wouldn't, so I swiped this flag and came down here to give you warning—that's all."

The conductor came hurrying up just then.

While the engineer seemed disinclined to believe Dan's story, the conductor took just the opposite view of it.

"All right! Much obliged, boy," he said. "We'll be on the lookout."

"My friend, can't you take us with you?" demanded the lawyer. "We want to go to Tucson, and—"

"Hello! Is this a strike to get a free ride to Tucson?" demanded the conductor, suspiciously.

"No, it isn't, sir! Upon my word, it isn't," said Dan. "Every word I have told you is true, but all the same we do want to go to Tucson, and we haven't got the price."

"But these horses?"

"We swiped them from the gang. We don't want them. We will leave them right here."

"Get into the baggage car," said the conductor. "We will take you to Alabata; if we don't strike the gang there I will put you under arrest."

"Terms accepted," said Schuster. "We will strike them there, surest thing."

They got into the baggage car, and then the conductor questioned Dan further as the train moved on.

When the train stopped at Ringal the conductor got off and gave the agent every opportunity to speak, but he never said a word.

The conductor then went forward and said something to the engineer.

There were no passengers getting on at Ringal, so he came directly into the baggage car.

"Here you are, Bill," he said, handing the baggage master a revolver.

Then, turning to the lawyer, he demanded:

"Can you shoot?"

"My friend," replied Schuster, "I'm not in it. I couldn't hit a dead cat if it lay at my feet on the ground, but this boy can shoot to beat the band."

"So can I," replied the conductor, grimly, "and when it comes to a case like this, I always shoot to kill."

Nothing more was said, and the train rushed on to Alabata, where it began to slow down.

"Block against us, Bill," said the conductor. "I told Charley if it wasn't to rush right by."

"What can be ahead of us?" demanded the baggage master. "It can't be No. 6."

"Of course it can't. If she had been behind time we would have heard of it before now. I guess this lad has given it to us straight."

The train stopped.

The conductor, who had now left the baggage car, got off boldly, and looked around, the baggage master at the same time throwing the door of his car open.

The station agent proved to be a lame man, and he came hobbling forward.

"Block is against you, Mr. Carter," he said.

"I see it is," replied the conductor. "What is the trouble? Do you know?"

"No, I don't."

As he uttered the words, from around behind the station on both sides armed men came running.

They were all masked, but from their clothing Dan had no difficulty in recognizing Lime Siler and others of the Tombstone gang.

"Hands up!" shouted Siler. "We have business with this train."

At the same time he covered the conductor, while two others did the same for the engineer.

Then like a flash the fight was on.

Dan seized his rifle, and aiming at the hands which held Siler's revolver, put a ball into it.

The baggage master shot one or two men who were making for the express car.

The conductor, less particular than Dan, fired straight at Siler's head as the revolver fell from his hand.

Lime Siler dropped dead on the platform, and in the same breath Dan, turning his rifle toward the engine, picked off one of the masked men.

It was Dick Waffles, and as he fell wounded the engineer shot the other dead.

Return fire had been coming in the meanwhile.

One brakeman was shot dead, and just then a wild yell was heard behind the box in the baggage car.

"I'm shot! I'm killed! I'm dead!" shouted Schuster, and he fell heavily to the floor.

Dan was still blazing away, and so were the conductor and Bill, the baggage man, when all at once the whole gang turned and ran for their lives.

Jack Barber, as he dodged behind the station, suddenly wheeled around and fired at Dan, calling out with a fierce imprecation that he had been the cause of it all.

Without a sound, Dan fell to the floor of the car.

It was all over now.

The attack upon the 'Frisco flyer had failed, thanks to Little Dan Deadshot, but Dan himself lay there as one dead.

CHAPTER XXI.

DAN FINDS HIMSELF A MULTI-MILLIONAIRE.

The conductor looked into the baggage car first thing.

"Anybody hurt here?" he demanded. "I thought I saw that boy go down."

"So you did," replied the agent. "He is done for, I think, poor fellow. The old man is dead."

"Well, look out for that cur," cried the conductor, shaking his fist in the face of the trembling station agent. "We want to land him at Tucson all right."

The conductor bent over Dan, who was now conscious.

"Where were you hit?" he asked.

"In the side," replied Dan. "I don't think it amounts to much. I can get up, I guess."

"Lie still. I'll see if there isn't a doctor aboard," said the conductor.

"Look out for Mr. Schuster, sir. I'm afraid he is dead," replied Dan.

"He is," said the baggage man. "He was shot through the head."

Everything went swimming around as he lay there, and then all in an instant, it seemed, two well-dressed gentlemen were bending over him.

One was pulling off his coat, while the other held him up.

"A dwarf, Doc," said the man who held Dan. "This is strange. You remember the story I told you? You know what my business in Arizona is?"

"I haven't forgotten a word of what you told me, Granby," replied the other. "If he turns out to be your dwarf it will, indeed, be strange enough, but a sight of his breast will prove it."

The coat was off now, and the vest speedily followed.

The doctor then pulled Dan's shirt up over his head without ceremony.

"The star on the breast!" exclaimed Granby. "Doctor, this is marvelous. It's the boy!"

The doctor made no reply. He was examining Dan's wound.

"Stand up," he said, suddenly seizing Dan's hand. "There's nothing the matter with you but a flesh wound. Bullet struck a rib and glanced off. You are all right, my boy."

"That's what I told the conductor," replied Dan, springing to his feet.

"Look to Mr. Schuster, doctor!" he cried. "Perhaps you can help him. He may not be dead."

The doctor immediately did so, but the lawyer was past help.

He was not dead, however, but was at that very moment breathing his last.

The 'Frisco flyer arrived at Tucson, and Dan, accompanied by Lawyer Granby and Dr. Meredith, went to the Palace Hotel.

The body of the unfortunate Schuster was removed to an undertaker's shop.

On the way to the hotel—they went in a cab—Dan caught the lawyer's arm.

"Look!" he cried. "There they are now! That is Bill Lancaster and his sister."

"It is Lelia Deacon, all right," said the lawyer. "It is so long since I have seen her brother that I cannot identify him."

"I should say not," returned Dr. Meredith. "Better keep the boy shady."

"Do you think they have got onto my coming here, Mr. Granby?" Dan asked.

"Of course they haven't," replied the lawyer. "How could they? But here we are at the hotel."

Mr. Granby engaged the rooms, one for Dr. Meredith, and the other for himself and Dan.

"Max Wittpenn told me that you were a splendid shot, Dan," remarked Mr. Granby. "It is true, I suppose?"

"Well, I can do something in that line, sir," replied Dan, modestly; "but Max was a very good shot himself."

"He said you were a better one," continued the doctor. "Among other things, he told me that you could hit an old-fashioned silver three-cent piece on a revolving disc the length of his gallery nine times out of ten."

"With a revolver?" asked Dr. Meredith.

"With either rifle or revolver," replied the lawyer.

"How long was the gallery?" asked the doctor.

"That he did not say. How long was it, Dan?"

"The full length of the lot, sir, a hundred feet."

"I'd like to bet you can't hit it eight times out of ten," said the doctor.

"I'll have to wait until I come into my fortune before I bet," said Dan, quietly. "Besides, I haven't got a silver three-cent piece."

"I have," said Mr. Granby. "I have carried one in my pocketbook for luck for the last five years. Doctor, how much do you want to bet?"

"Bet you a hundred to fifty," said the doctor, pulling out his roll.

"Bet taken," replied Mr. Granby, promptly. "Put up your money, doctor. It isn't necessary to find a stakeholder where you and I are concerned, I guess."

"That's right," said the doctor. "I can do a little shooting myself, and I say the boy can do it."

"Oh, pshaw! What's the use of harping on the thing? We can't settle the bet to-night."

"What's the reason we can't? I know something of Tucson, unless it is altogether changed since my last visit. There used to be a shooting gallery down on Arivaca street. I wouldn't wonder a bit if it was there now. What's the matter with taking a stroll down that way?"

Very reluctantly Mr. Granby consented, and they started out to look up the gallery.

Then he and the doctor, with Dan following, started to walk to Arivaca street, where they found the gallery still running, and went in.

George Granby was certainly a good lawyer, and a sharp fellow in his way, but he was no detective, and not as well up in the tricks of crooks as he might have been.

If such had been the case, he might have suspected the man with his coat collar turned up and a pair of blue spectacles covering his eyes, whom he had several times passed in the corridor of the hotel.

So little attention had he paid to this person that he even suspected nothing when he found him in conversation with Gus Tueteberg, the man who ran the shooting gallery.

There was nobody else in the place when Dan and his friends entered, and the man with the blue glasses went right out as soon as Dr. Meredith began to talk shooting.

"We have a little bet on this boy's shooting, which we want to decide," said the doctor. "Could you fix us up a special target here?"

"I will if I can, gentlemen," replied "Gus," as everybody in Tucson called the man. "What sort of a target do you want?"

"A revolving disc," said the doctor.

"I can give you that, all right. What's the distance?"

"A hundred feet."

"Well, my range is a hundred and fifty feet, but I can move this counter forward and make it a hundred if you wish. It is set on rollers for the benefit of those who wish to shoot at short range."

"I can do it as well at a hundred and fifty feet as I can at a hundred," said Dan.

"What do you say, George? Does the bet stand at a hundred and fifty?" the doctor asked.

"I'll leave it to Dan," replied Granby.

"You're safe," said Dan. "Doctor, what do you say?"

"Of course I say yes, for it increases my chances of winning," replied Dr. Meredith. "Get down to tacks, George. Foot out your three-cent piece."

The target was soon arranged.

Meanwhile several rough-looking fellows dropped into the gallery.

They came in one by one, and all wanted to shoot.

"In a minute, gentlemen; in a minute!" said Gus. "There is a bet to be decided here."

He produced a number of revolvers, and let Dan have his pick.

Dan tried three of them, shooting at pipes, and selecting one, announced himself ready for the test.

Just then the man with the blue glasses dropped in again.

He appeared to have been drinking during his brief absence.

"I'm the best shot in Arizona!" he shouted. "I can lay down any man between here and Tombstone, rifle or revolver! Who wants to shoot against me?"

"Take your time, friend! Take your time!" cried Gus. "There gentlemen have a bet on the boy."

CHAPTER XXII.

DEACON SAYS "THE BOY MUST DIE."

Gus had fastened the three-cent piece on the revolving disc with shoemaker's wax, and it was spinning around merrily.

Dan leveled his revolver, and fired.

Gus stopped the disc and examined the coin.

"One!" he cried, and the men cheered.

Then it was two, three, four, five, six, and then a miss.

"Never mind, Dan," said George Granby, "your shooting is all Max Wittpenn claimed for it, but you can't hope to make a bull's-eye every time. Let her go!"

And Dan put it through to ten, hitting the three-cent piece every time, and leaving little of it but a shattered mass.

"You win, George," said the doctor, starting to produce his roll.

"Hold on," said Granby. "I'll settle for this. We'll fix up the bet later on."

"What do you mean?" cried the man with the blue glasses, suddenly stepping in front of Granby. "Do you think we hain't honest here?"

Quick as lightning he dealt the lawyer a blow between the eyes which laid him on the floor.

"Rough house! Rough house!" bawled another of the men.

Two set upon Dr. Meredith, and in spite of several well-aimed blows which he managed to get in, laid him down beside his friend.

Then they all rushed out of the shooting gallery in a body when Gus picked up a rifle and threatened to fire.

George Granby and Dr. Meredith got on their feet as quick as they could, but it was too late. The mischief was done.

"Where's Dan? Where's the boy?" was the question both put in a breath.

"Upon my word, gentlemen, I don't know," said Gus, coolly.

The rest of the night was spent with a Tucson detective looking for Little Dan Deadshot, but he was not found.

Leaving George Granby to overcome the disastrous results of his carelessness as best he could, we must now follow the fortunes of Dan.

He was run around into the alley behind the shooting gallery, and there he saw the man who held him on the right throw his blue spectacles away, and then knew what to expect.

It was Bill Lancaster, of course.

"Leave him to me, boys," said Bill, throwing them a handful of greenbacks. "Much obliged for your help. Divide that among you, and if things go the way I want them to tomorrow, I'll give you more."

Thus saying, while still clutching Dan by the collar, he opened the rear door of a low one-story building on the opposite side of the alley, and dragged Dan inside.

Bill dragged him on through the hall, and pushed him through another door into a dingy, ill-furnished room, where there was a bed, a table and a few chairs.

"Sit down there," growled Bill, and having locked the door, he rang a little call bell which stood upon the table several times.

In a moment a large, dirty-looking man, with one eye and the whole side of his face tied up in a cloth came in through another door.

"Did you ring, boss?" he asked, hoarsely.

"Tell Aleck I've got the boy, and shall keep him here to-

night. Tell him to get the customers out and close up right away, and then come in here with me."

"All right, boss. I'll tell him," replied the man, as he withdrew.

"Well, Dan, you see I get there," he remarked, "and I've got you here. Boy, you are in my power now."

"Well, I know you mean to kill me. How can I help it? You're a six-footer, and I'm only a dwarf. If you want to put me out of business I can't do a thing."

"Tell me all you know about this Deacon will business."

"I suppose I might as well, since you know it already. I know you are my half-uncle. I know that I stand between you and millions. I can't help that."

"Upon my word, you're a cool card!" exclaimed Deacon; "but, then, it runs in the blood. Who were these men you came into town with to-night?"

"One was Dr. Meredith."

"And the other?"

"His name is Granby. You were up at the Palace Hotel walking about with your blue glasses on. I suppose you looked at the register and know who they are?"

"I give up. You're all right," laughed Deacon. "If it wasn't for you being in my way, I vow I'd adopt you, but as it is——"

"Here's the whisky, boss," said the man with his face tied up, coming in with a bottle and glass just then.

He set the whisky bottle on the table, and withdrew. A few moments later a big, brawny Arizonian came stalking into the room.

"That's the boy," replied Deacon. "What do you think of him?"

"Why, there hain't much of him to think about. He hain't hip high. I could wring his neck with one twist of my hand."

"Well, Aleck, it's up to you to do it, and I'm putting up liberal for the job. The boy must die."

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

For more than an hour Bill Deacon and the man Aleck sat there drinking and talking, but as they dropped their English and began talking Spanish, after Deacon's remark with which the last chapter closes, Dan could not understand a word they said. Not another word was addressed to him by either of the men.

After they had finished the bottle of whisky they went out into the saloon to get another, and forgot to come back again.

And so he lay there listening to every sound, and all at once he was startled by a sound overhead.

There was some one on the roof; some one was working away at a small skylight immediately over Dan's head.

In a moment the skylight was pulled away, and a face peered down through the opening.

It was half tied up in a dirty cloth.

"Dan!" called the man, in a hoarse whisper. "Do you know me, Dan?"

Dan knew him now! He could not understand why he had not recognized him before.

"Henry!" he cried, springing off the bed.

"Hush! Hush! Not so loud, Dan. Say, it's the luckiest thing in life that I drifted here and took a job to tend bar for my old side partner, Aleck Gonzales. Ketch the rope, Dan!"

Down settled the rope, and Dan clutching it with both hands, was quickly drawn upon the roof, his feather weight cutting no figure with Henry.

"Say, is it all true, Dan?" demanded the outlaw. "Do yer come into yer millions ter-morrer? Is what them two snoozers has been talking about over their whisky all straight goods, Dan?"

"It's so," said Dan, "providing I can appear in the probate court to-morrow. Then the Deacon millions are mine."

"Then, by Jerusalem, it's up to me to produce you thar, lad, and I'll do it if it takes a leg."

"If I get the money, Henry, I'll see that you don't suffer. I shan't forget all that you have done for me."

There was a scuttle at the other end of the roof, and now it was suddenly thrown back, and Bill Deacon's head was thrust out.

"Run, Dan! Run! Take this rifle! Shoot if you have to!" cried Henry. "I can't see to shoot no more."

The building upon which they stood was one of a row all with the same flat roofs.

As Dan seized the rifle Bill Deacon came up on the roof, quickly followed by Aleck.

The outlaw leader was entirely too drunk to do business, and his companion was in the same fix.

Deacon threw up a rifle, but as he fired wildly he keeled over backward and fell flat on the asphalt.

Dan wheeled around, sent one shot flying at Aleck, putting the bullet through his hat and knocking it off.

With a yell Aleck dropped his rifle and fell over on top of Bill Deacon.

He thought he was shot, but Dan knew better, as he ran on beside Henry to the end of the row, where both jumped down into the street and took to their heels.

"The matter of the will of Madelaine Deacon is now in order," said Judge Reed, from his bench in the probate court next morning at a little after ten o'clock. "Who appears in this case?"

A seedy looking lawyer arose.

In the last seat in the courtroom Miss Lelia Deacon was seated, anxiously watching the proceedings.

Her brother was not on hand, being at that moment dead drunk in the room in the rear of Aleck Gonzales' saloon.

"If it please Your Honor, I appear in behalf of William Deacon and Lelia Deacon, spinster," said the lawyer.

"What is your claim for your clients?" Judge Reed asked.

"We claim the entire estate under the second provision of the will, Your Honor."

"Which means that you are prepared to prove the death of the minor, Daniel Deacon, sole heir under the first provision of the will?"

"You are so prepared?" demanded the judge sternly. "Speak up, Mr. Henderson."

"I am not, Your Honor, but we submit that inasmuch as the boy has been missing since the Indian massacre in which his father was killed, that he can scarcely be alive now. I submit——"

"Stop, Mr. Henderson. The court simply desires to be informed as to your claim. Anybody appear for the minor, Daniel Deacon?"

"I do, Your Honor," said Mr. Granby, rising.

"Your name?"

"George Granby."

"You are a practising attorney?"

"I am."

"What State?"

"Massachusetts."

"What is your claim?"

"We claim the entire estate for the minor, Daniel Deacon."

"You are prepared to prove that he is still living?"

"I am prepared to offer the boy himself as proof. Dan, stand up!"

And Little Dan Deadshot arose in the Tucson probate court to start the ball rolling which was to roll him into wealth and transform him from a poor Bowery waif into a multi-millionaire!

Dan came into his fortune, all right.

When he woke up that morning Henry took him around to the Palace Hotel, and turned him over to George Granby, and from that moment the troubles of our city boy were at an end.

Dan carried the proofs of his identity upon his body.

There was no going back on the star tattooed upon the boy's breast.

It took time, of course, but in the end Dan came into his own.

The very first thing he did after the court decided in his favor was to ask an advance of five hundred dollars from Mr. Granby, which he turned over to Henry, and sent him to San Francisco to have a glass eye fitted into his damaged face.

Later—that was after Dan got to Boston—he bought Henry a tract of land in the Arivaca Valley, and stocked it for him.

Henry has entirely reformed his evil ways, and is a prosperous ranchero now.

As for the rest, there is little to be said.

These events took place several years ago, but in spite of the lapse of time our hero has never married.

Dan understands himself. He is a dwarf, and unattractive personally. He lives a life of his own, a life of study and travel. In company with good friends which he has made, he has in his large steam yacht visited many lands and astonished many people with his wonderful skill with rifle and revolver.

Next week's issue will contain "JOE WILEY, THE YOUNG TEMPERANCE LECTURER." By Jno. B. Dowd.

CURRENT NEWS

After a constant fight for eighteen years with the Kaw River, Kan., W. M. Smith at last has given up the battle and moved away. During that time he has lost all but fifteen acres of his 125-acre farm, the river having washed the rest away.

D. L. Bowman, secretary of the United Evangelical Sunday-school, Lititz, Pa., has a record of not having missed a session in the last thirty-eight years. J. B. Young, one of the teachers, has a record of twenty-four years of perfect attendance, and Susie Diehm has attended regularly twelve years.

A fine of \$50 to \$200 is the penalty for treating in Delaware (Ohio) saloons, according to an ordinance passed by the city council following the city's voting wet under the Beal law. The ordinance also requires saloons shall have no screens, glazed glass windows or any obstruction preventing a full view of the interior from the street. Music in saloons also is barred.

Ignatz Luzar, of Whiting, Ind., said he was poor. On that ground he induced a local judge to reduce a charge of grand larceny to petit larceny for stealing \$40 out of the coat of a man employed by the Standard Oil Company. He wanted a bond while awaiting trial, so he sent word to his wife to take \$1,000 from under the mattress in their one-room home and bring it to court. He was fined \$5 and sent to jail for sixty days.

J. P. Graham, a typewriter agent, after a 7 o'clock breakfast in his seven-room apartment in Indianapolis, loaded his household goods on automobile trucks, which made the run of seventy-three miles to Terre Haute by 1 o'clock. At 6 o'clock the family ate supper in their new home, with all the furniture in place. The trucks were back in Indianapolis before 6 o'clock. The cost was \$15 a truck.

S. Fawns places a value of \$19,000 on his tongue, which he lost while employed by W. A. King & Co., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. He has started an action in trespass to recover that amount. Fawns alleges that he was descending a stairway and that a defect in one of the stair treads caused him to fall to the bottom. During the fall he bit his tongue so badly that half of it had to be amputated.

Dogs of war, trained to carry first aid kits in saddle-bag fashion and search out wounded soldiers on the battlefields, will be among the police exhibits in the city department classes at the Charity Dog Show in the Seventy-first Regiment Armory, New York, March 19 and 20. The many prizes for police and firemen's dogs are attracting much attention and the innovation looks like an assured success.

The Lima Bank, of Lima, N. Y., was robbed shortly before noon recently of between \$10,000 and \$11,000 by a masked man, who held up the cashier and his assistant at the point of a gun. The robbery was apparently well planned, as it took place at a time when the main street of the village was deserted. No one was in the bank except the cashier and assistant cashier. Covering them with two revolvers, the robber forced the cashier to hand over all the cash. The robber made good his escape, and the cashier was unable to give much description of him. The sheriff and the Rochester police are working on the case.

John Hundley, a farmer, awoke in the morning to be advised by his wife of a serious deficit in the pantry of both flour and meal. Hundley's horses were not shod, the sleet and ice were too rough for the animals; the family's strong box was empty, and the farmer resided six miles from town. But John met the emergency. He constructed a large sled, hitched nine foxhounds to it, loaded on five bushels of stock peas and hit the trail for Camden, Tenn. After a couple of hours' rest Hundley returned home, the dogs pulling a bag of meal and a barrel of flour through the snow.

James B. Harris, of Greencastle, Ind., who has been working for months to obtain a list of the dog owners of the State for a New York dog medicine manufacturing concern, has announced that he has the name of every man, woman and child in Indiana who pays taxes on a dog. He says in the State there are 166,547 dogs on which taxes are paid. This is an average to each county of 1,810. Madison County leads the list with 3,688 dogs. Indianapolis has 6,000, which is the greatest number for any one city. The compiled list includes only those dogs on which taxes are paid. There are probably as many more that the State gets no revenue from.

The War Department will be glad to have any books and periodicals that the owners no longer desire for the soldiers of the army. This fact was made known at the Army Building, New York city, recently, when Col. A. L. Smith, Q.M.C., U.S.A., gave out a copy of a letter he had received from Major-General Aleshire, chief of the quartermaster corps. "The Secretary of War," General Aleshire wrote, "has directed this office to take some steps to let the public in the larger cities know that the department will be glad to receive and distribute to the soldiers all such discarded books and periodicals that they wish to dispose of. It is desired that your office communicate to the public in the vicinity of your depot the above data." Any one having books or periodicals which he would like to give away should communicate with Colonel Smith, Army Building, 39 Whitehall street, New York city, who will send a messenger for them.

Jumping Jack, the Boy Acrobat

—OR—

LEAPING INTO LUCK

By William Wade

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER II (continued)

Jack felt about him in the mow, but the spot where Jerry had lain was vacant. The young athlete felt his way to the edge of the mow and then called the name of his young friend.

There was no answer. What did it mean? Was Jerry playing a joke upon him? He dispelled this idea.

But what a predicament he was in. It was not cold, for it was a midsummer night. But he was without his clothes and Jack felt greatly embarrassed and at a loss for a plan of action.

"Jerry! Where are you?" he called. But there was no answer.

The young athlete crept to the crack in the barn. He could see the distant house outlined against the night sky.

There were moments when Jack rubbed his eyes to make sure that he was not dreaming. He could not understand why Jerry should play such a trick upon him, and he began to grow angry.

But this did not relieve his predicament. There seemed no other way than to spend the night in the mow.

So after a while he settled down into the hay again to sleep away the remaining hours. But just then he heard the rumble of wheels.

A vehicle of some sort came to a stop in the roadway, opposite the barn. Voices sounded on the night air. They were hoarse and low-pitched, but Jack became at once interested, for a few intelligible words reached his ears.

"I tell ye, they're gone over the bridge, Dave. We are safe!"

"Don't ye believe it, Moses Lynn. They are runnin' ther hoss up the other street. Kain't you hear?"

"By thunder! I believe you are right. They will be back this way in a minute, and our hoss is done. He ain't got a leg under him. Thar, he's down!"

There was a crash and a heavy fall, with the labored breathing of a spent horse. That he had fallen in the shafts from overexertion was plain.

Jack Wallace was instantly on the alert.

As silently as possible, he crept to the edge of the mow and listened. The truth dawned upon him. He had heard wild stories of Moses and David Lynn, known as the Lynn brothers. They were professional burglars and outlaws.

That they were pursued by the officers of the law, he shrewdly guessed.

That they were in a bad predicament, was quickly made evident, and Jack speedily became possessed of facts which gave him a thrill.

The two outlaws excitedly argued a point.

"I tell ye, Dave, we can't take the swag with us. If we get away free and clear, we'll be doin' well."

"You are a fool, Mose! Do you think I am goin' to give up a cool fifty thousand right here? Not much!"

"But the bag is too heavy."

"What'll we do then? We can't leave it here fer them to get. That would be too easy."

"That's so! Hello, here's an idea. Here is Sam Gray's barn and he has just filled it with hay. Hide ther bag in the haymow fer now."

"Good enough! That's a good idea. They will never look for it there. Give us a lift."

Shuffling footsteps and deep breathing told Jack that the two burglars were going to carry out this plan.

He accepted the only chance at hand and burrowed deeper into the hay and waited with bated breath for the result.

The burglars had entered the barn door and one of them flashed a dark lantern about the place.

"Everything looks lovely, Dave. Now hoist her up to me."

One of the crooks climbed up into the mow, while the other passed up the bag. He was within but a few feet of Jack, who kept low and quiet, and waited with tense nerves.

The burglar tossed the hay over and buried the bag in it. Then he slid down to the barn floor. The door was closed behind them and then Jack heard retreating footsteps.

CHAPTER III.

A GREAT MISTAKE.

All these things had happened in a very few minutes. Jack Wallace was never more excited in all his life.

All was plain to him. A great robbery had been committed. The burglars, pursued by the officers of the law, had hidden the treasure in the haymow of Sam Gray's barn, and then fled for their own safety.

Of this latter act, Jack had been a witness. But the question was: What was to be done?

Jack's teeth were chattering with a fancied chill. He crept out of the hay and slid down onto the barn floor. It occurred to him that there might be a pair of overalls or some other garments to be found in the barn.

His surmise proved correct. Groping in the dark, he found in one corner, near the horse stalls, a pair of overalls. They were much too large for him, but he put them on.

His purpose was to find the officers of the law and lead them to the hiding-place of the stolen treasure.

He opened the barn door and crept out. Just then he heard footsteps. They were coming rapidly from the direction of the house.

A small, dark figure became visible in the gloom. In an instant a smothered cry of recognition escaped Jack.

"Jerry, is it you?"

"Jack! What did you think had become of me?"

"Why, why didn't you wake me up?" asked Jack, half angrily. "I didn't want to spend the night in the haymow."

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

LETTER MAILED IN 1857 DELIVERED 58 YEARS LATER.

Nearly fifty-eight years after it was written and posted to him, a letter has just been delivered in Colorado Springs, Colo., to Prof. James Hutchison Kerr. The missive was written by Prof. E. F. M. Faehts, Prof. Kerr's former instructor in civil engineering in an Eastern school at New London, Pa., March 20, 1857, when Prof. Kerr was not quite 20. He is now in his seventy-eighth year.

Prof. Kerr believes the missive was sent to one of the colleges he attended and mislaid until it was forwarded here.

HOLD SCHOOL FOR ONE FAMILY.

It's not every family that can have a school all its own, but the family of August Bambach is an exceptional one, and he is entitled to a school of his own, if any one is.

The Lone Tree school, Oakland, Cal., one of the old log schoolhouses of the wheat days, has been closed for some years for lack of pupils. Bambach moved into that particular district and brought along his wife and eleven children. Eight of them are of school age, and the directors immediately began to get busy in their search for a teacher. They found one and opened the school for the benefit of the Bambach family.

TO PREVENT NICOTINE POISONING.

Innumerable attempts have been made to protect smokers from the harmful effects of nicotine. So far, however, this object has not been achieved without at the same time depriving the tobacco of its aroma and taste. Recently Ambialet, a French physician, read a paper before the Medical Society of the Department of the Rhone on one of these attempts. His plan is to do away with the defects of other remedies, and it deserves publication, particularly because of its simplicity. Dr. Ambialet has found that if the ordinary coltsfoot or butterbur, which is very common in the countryside, is mixed with tobacco the harmful effects of the latter are completely eliminated. He has himself smoked daily some forty cigarettes made of this mixture without feeling the slightest effect from the nicotine. At any rate, the remedy may be worth a trial, coltsfoot leaves being perfectly harmless and cheap. Dr. Ambialet claims that tobacco mixed with coltsfoot leaves retains its full aroma and taste, the only perceptible change, if any, being an additional flavor like that of Turkish tobacco. This added flavor should render the mixture very acceptable to most smokers.

FATHER SENT LAD TO SCHOOL WEARING 21-POUND WEIGHT.

Because he could not control his son Albert, aged 12, the boy's father, Albert Hartmann, Sr., hung a seven-foot logging chain around his neck and fastened it with a pad-

lock, according to his admissions in the county court of Phillips, Wis., to Judge Owen. On the end of the chain was a piece of railroad iron weighing twenty-one pounds. With this weight around his neck, the boy went to school three days until the case was reported to Sheriff E. H. Hicks.

When Sheriff Hicks reached the school, a short distance from the city, where he went on complaint of William Milo, a neighbor, he found the boy scarcely able to move his head. The youngster had placed a handkerchief around his neck in an effort to prevent chafing. Manacled in this manner, and with the thermometer 26 degrees below zero, the boy had been obliged to trudge to school, carrying the weight in his hand.

To remove the chain it was necessary for Sheriff Hicks to break one of the links. The weight was placed about the boy's neck by the father because his son went to a neighbor's house contrary to the wishes of his parents. It was left on him from Sunday night until Wednesday.

The boy's parents were brought into court and the father admitted the facts to County Judge Owen. He stated he could not control the youth.

Judge Owen will endeavor to find a home for the boy near Phillips, and in event he fails will send him to a State school near Milwaukee.

FAVORS LONG STROKE.

John Fitzpatrick, formerly a champion sculler in England, now assistant coach of the Princeton crews, favors the long stroke. In a recent article in the Princetonian he says:

"Although the advantages of the different strokes of both the past and the present have always been a matter of varying opinion, in theory only one of these is perfect. A long stroke is not necessarily a slow one, but as the pace is increased it is obvious that after a certain point the length of the stroke is diminished on account of the time consumed in the beginning, finish and recovery.

"There is nothing gained by a good beginning in the long stroke if the momentum acquired is not held until the last instant. If the oar is then removed promptly from the water the rower has an opportunity to rest as he collects himself for the next effort, while in the shorter pull the recovery must be more rapid. The long stroke is the vindication of the sliding seat, and the object of every oarsman should be to obtain the maximum of length with the minimum of effort.

"In considering the merits of the sliding seat, two things have to be taken into account. First, suppose that no slide is used. Then the velocity of the body as it swings from the hips is approximately one foot per second.

"Secondly, leaving out of account the velocity of the body, the slide travels one foot per second itself. If the two are combined simultaneously the velocity of the whole will be two feet per second."

FROM ALL POINTS

William W. Roper, Princeton '02, has been appointed head coach of the Swarthmore team for next season. The announcement came as a surprise, as it had been rumored that a Pennsylvania graduate would be elected. Roper was for three years head coach of the Princeton football team.

Kept in a sealed metal box since the wedding of his parents, forty-four years ago, a large, elaborately iced and decorated wedding cake made its second appearance at the marriage feast of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Heald, of Portland, Ore. The cake, despite its journeyings and age, was as good as the day it was made.

By not sleeping in a bed for three years, George Rowland, peddler, of Los Angeles, saved \$605. This is the story he told the police after he had been hauled from a sandpile under the municipal pier at Venice. "Why don't you sleep in a hotel?" asked Chief of Police Watson, as he finished counting Rowland's roll of money. "I haven't slept in a bed in three years," he said. "I'm trying to save up money enough to go back to Scranton, Pa., and retire."

The longest cribbage game in the history of the United States is nearing a close in Des Moines. It commenced in 1904, for 1,000,000 points. The players are now on their last 100,000, and will finish the game this year. The players are four prominent retired business men. A peculiarity of the contest is that during all this play not one of the contestants has ever held a 29 hand, the highest possible hand to be held in cribbage. During all these years they have never missed a week at play.

Miss Elsie Dobbins, of Caldwell, N. J., is the owner of a hen which she believes holds the world's championship for industry. The hen is 14 years old and recently it laid its 3,000th egg. The hen, which is a Plymouth Rock, was hatched on June 20, 1901, the third birthday of Miss Dobbins, to whom the chick was presented. An exact record of every egg that the hen laid was kept. The hen has come to be called "Old Reliable" because of its dependability as an egg-layer.

Chauncey Houchin, Fred Van Nada and Rex Fowler, White River fishermen, have invented a plan which has been very helpful to them this winter in catching fish. They made an arrangement for lighting the water under the ice, which attracted hundreds of fish to the place and these eagerly bit at the bait dropped to them on hooks. The catches were unusually large. The arrangement for lighting the water consisted of eight dry batteries, to which an electric light was attached and dropped into the water. The wire was heavily insulated to prevent charging the water with electricity.

When City Marshal Shelton opened the door of the city jail, Yates Center, Kan., the other morning he found three men who were not there when he left the jail. They were tramps who had broken into the place to find shelter. The town has lately been overrun with tramps, and they have become such a nuisance to the residents that the authorities have decided to adopt strict measures. The marshal will hereafter arrest all wanderers, give them a night's lodging and a couple of meals, then arraign them before the police judge. The latter will sentence them to work on the streets and they will be turned over to the street commissioner. A rockpile will be installed at the jail also.

The hairiest and most bewhiskered man in Philadelphia has been shorn of all his locks, and as a result Joseph Papaleo, proprietor of the Sanitary Shaving Parlor on South Seventh street, is \$1,000 richer than he was. The man's hair was trimmed at the annual hair-cutting and shaving contest of the Italian barbers held in the Casino Theater. Seven men who might have been taken for the proverbial hairy men of Borneo were gathered at the Inasmuch Mission as subjects for as many barbers in the contest. For four and one-half minutes fur flew on the stage, and the participants were almost hidden by flying locks and whiskers. Then Papaleo emerged the winner by several minutes. He had shaved his subject and cut his hair, without leaving a scratch from the razor or shears in the record time of four and a half minutes. No one disputed his right to the \$1,000 prize.

Mountain lions have infested the 50,000-acre game preserve of the Spring Valley Water Company, San Mateo, Cal., and are now slaughtering deer by the hundreds, as well as making nightly raids on the fowl and cattle on the coastside ranches. So grave is the situation that citizens have organized posses of hunters to ferret the wild beasts out of their lairs before they wipe out the game. The other night a three-year-old heifer was attacked by a lion within a few feet of the ranchhouse of the McGovern ranch, near Halfmoon Bay. Raids have been made on the cattle and fowl on the Savage and Mills ranches, in the same locality. Superintendent W. B. Lawrence, of the Spring Valley Water Company, appealed to the county authorities to take some action in the matter. It was admitted that it was a difficult problem, as the lions are supposed to be in a large area of virgin forests west of the Crystal Springs lakes. The Spring Valley game preserves are the largest in the State, and they extend over the 50,000 acres of land owned by the water company in San Mateo county. They have been stocked with deer, elk and other game animals. Large sums of money are spent in fencing and patrolling the large domains. The company's game wardens have reported that hundreds of deer are falling victims of the mountain lions every week.

THE COUNT OF CONNEMARA

—OR—

The Old Pirate's Secret Treasure

By J. P. Richards

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XXIV (continued)

In the meantime, he paid several visits to the old fisherman in Ireland, who had confessed all he knew about the boy.

One evening, while visiting the old fisherman in the garb of a common English sailor, Barry was seized and taken on board the frigate *Mermaid*, where he was compelled to serve.

It was then he felt that Captain Draco and his son were cruel tyrants.

He was punished cruelly for the least faults, and it seemed to him that the officers hated him for some secret cause, which was the truth.

The lad escaped in Galway, as we have seen, leaving his mark behind him.

Then he met the old pirate and his daughter, when a new career was opened to him.

Yet he did not covet the old pirate's treasure, which was safe on board the yacht as they all sailed for France.

Barry's mother was on board the yacht also, being an invalid.

Captain Draco confessed that he knew Barry all through as the real heir to the title and the estate, and so did the old lord.

The son died before the ship reached France, and the old man followed him to the grave a few days after.

The young privateer never claimed his Irish title and estate, but he did wed the fair girl known as Grace Draco.

And Captain Butler fell heir to the old pirate's treasure, as he married Moya after the close of the war.

Through the young captain's intercession, Joan became friends with her father and Garry and they settled in France, where the little rogue became really famous, in after days, as a privateer.

Barry served until the close of the war, and then settled down in Spain, with his young wife and his relatives.

And the young Count of Connemara was never seen in Galway again.

(THE END.)

NEXT WEEK

A ROUSING SEA STORY

—READ—

HURRICANE HAL

—OR—

(THE BOY WHO WAS BORN AT SEA

By J. P. Richards

OUT NEXT WEEK

SOLDIERS HUNT A PANTHER.

To Benares, India, was recently brought the story of a thrilling fight with a panther in Eastern Bengal by the Ninety-second Punjabis. One of the sections of this Indian regiment, which had been scattered through a number of isolated villages, owing to disturbed conditions, was stationed about twenty-five miles from Mymensingh.

One day the subdivisional officer of the village approached the subadar with the request that he would give him assistance in rounding up a man-eating tiger which had been committing depredations in the neighborhood. The subadar agreed, and took the field himself, with a detachment of twenty-five men, to whom ball cartridges had been served. The attack was made as though the detachment intended to storm a Burmese stockade, but the event proved that precautions had been taken advisedly. The *Times of India* describes the encounter as follows:

The party, as finally drawn up, consisted of Mr. Ross, the subdivisional officer, in front, with the havildar, Mahomed Azim, a very good scout, on his right, and Lance-Naik Sakhawat Khan, a small, intelligent man of great courage, on his left. The remainder of the party were drawn up at three paces interval about twenty yards in the rear. Subadar Ahmed Khan was between the two parties, whence he could both watch the scouts and keep an eye on the line in the rear. The havildar and the lance-naik were told that the Sahib was to have the first shot.

The order having been given to charge the magazines and fix bayonets, the party advanced on the scrub in which the tiger was supposed to be lying. Unfortunately the animal was crouching much closer in than was thought. The party had scarcely started when it broke from cover and charged straight at Mr. Ross and his companions.

Mr. Ross was taken entirely by surprise, but he dropped hastily to one knee and fired. The animal still came on. Its next leap would have landed it on Mr. Ross. Havildar Mahomed Azim, however, jumped in front of the subdivisional officer and took the charge on his bayonet, at the same moment pulling the trigger of his rifle. The violence of the impact flung him backward. The animal badly scratched the havildar's face and then leaped upon Sakhawat Khan, who had rushed to his comrade's rescue. The lance-naik also received the charge upon his bayonet and pulled the trigger at the same time.

He, too, was knocked down, and, in his case, the animal was not content merely to keep him down. It bit his leg savagely, crushing the bones in the ankle to pieces. In the meanwhile, the subadar, quite forgetting his maxim that the director of actions must not take part in the actual fighting, uttered a warlike shout, and, waving his gun, rushed into the fray. The extended line of men behind dashed up with leveled bayonets and Mr. Ross also went into the scrum.

There were shouts and shots and bayonet thrusts. The animal got two more men down, and they emerged bleeding badly. Other men were knocked down and rose again unhurt. At the end the fight had moved nearly twenty yards. Finally, when the animal lay dead, and the sepoys had drawn off, a panther was discovered, and not a tiger.

INTERESTING TOPICS

A man whose skull thickened one inch in the last nine months was exhibited before the Jefferson Hospital Clinical Society of Philadelphia by Dr. Elmer H. Funk. The disease with which the patient is suffering is known in surgery as *ostetis deformans*. Dr. Funk said that the malady some times attacked the bones of the hands and feet, but very rarely the skull. What causes the disease is unknown, although it is suspected that it is due to some disorder of the blood.

The Atlantic fleet of the United States navy may come to canal water for winter maneuvers shortly, according to a wireless message received by Captain Hugh Rodman, superintendent of transportation on the Panama Canal, from Rear-Admiral Frank F. Fletcher, commander-in-chief of the Atlantic fleet. Rear-Admiral Fletcher asked if it would be convenient for the maneuvers to be held here, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Navy. Captain Rodman answered in the affirmative.

Rather than wait till her sweetheart's term in the county jail had expired, Miss Sarah Harris, seventeen, was married in the Recorder's office at the courthouse to Harrison Gregory. Gregory is serving out a sentence of six months in the county jail, Springfield, Mo., on a charge of violating the local option law. After the ceremony Gregory was led back to his cell, accompanied by his girl-wife, who was permitted by the jailer to converse with him through the bars for a half hour.

When Mrs. Rosie Silberman's dog bit Michael Ehrhardt's left leg the other day in East St. Louis, Ehrhardt thought the joke was on the dog until he looked down and saw that his trousers was torn. This made him angry and he drew his revolver and fired two shots at the dog. Mrs. Silberman had Ehrhardt arrested for discharging a firearm in the city limits. The dog's mistake in selection took place in front of his owner's grocery at Sixth street and Piggott avenue. The leg he bit was made of wood.

Col. Robert Stevenson, veteran mining man and explorer, is at work on the Gladstone mine, near Allison, B. C., and has some fine ore. Although seventy-five years old, he is planning to lead an expedition to the far north in search of a lost mine, which was worked in the Cariboo placer days by two men, Rose and Johnson, both of whom were killed in a quarrel about their discovery. Col. Stevenson was acquainted with the men and has information which leads him to believe he can recover the ground, which is on a tributary of Antler Creek.

Certain species of bamboos flower only once in about fifty-five years, and, strangely enough, all the trees in a locality flower about the same time. Those in Burma began flowering last year, and now they are all in blossom.

The last time this species flowered was in 1859-60. They will now die and those that spring from the seeds born of this flowering will take their places and will not flower until about 1970. They may flower sporadically at other times, but the seed does not mature, for the bamboo cannot fertilize itself.

George Harris, a negro residing in the vicinity of Oneida, came to Helena, Ark., recently, bringing a unique collection of "omens." They consisted of a doll dressed in black, with a black cap over its head and a hangman's "noose" around its neck, a small coffin of strawboard and a placard bearing the legend, "Beware," in letters several inches in height. George found these things by his bedside when he awoke one morning and he brought them to Helena as "Exhibit A" should there be complications later.

Fred O'Connell, aged 24, a St. Louisan, owes his life to the services of a Scotch collie owned by Town Clerk Will Parker, of Pana, Ill. O'Connell's left foot was caught between the bumpers of two cars when the train took a siding in West Pana. O'Connell's foot was pinioned and he was unable to extricate himself. His cries attracted the collie. The dog seemed to take in the situation and ran to the Parker home, one block away, where he gave the alarm. Mrs. Parker followed the dog to the siding and found O'Connell unconscious. Mrs. Parker notified trainmen and they extricated O'Connell.

Postmaster D. J. Harrington, of Chisholm, Minn., placed the first collecting box in front of the postoffice recently, and, although it is of the regulation size and make, it puzzles many people as to its purpose. Some have used it for a garbage can and others for a slot machine. The other day it yielded a pair of old shoes, three tomato cans, a bunch of false hair, a much-used powder rag, a frozen sparrow, two bricks and a half-eaten cold lunch. In the garbage can that stands on the outer edge of the sidewalk was found four letters, six postcards, two parcel post packages and a bundle of mail order catalogues marked "Returned to Sender."

An exciting wild-hog hunt was made in the Round Bottom Hills, Ark., recently, and after an all-day chase two of the largest wild hogs seen in that section this year were killed. The hogs were the property of Newt Wade and had been in the woods for nearly three years. After shooting one of the beasts seven times with shotguns, it turned and fought, forcing Fred Lancaster and Grant Lawson, two of the hunters, to climb a tree. Ewing Lancaster crept up and killed it only after shooting it three times behind the shoulder with a rifle. The other hog was killed while being held at bay by the pack of dogs. One of the hogs weighed 242 pounds and the other 250 pounds.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

CAT SAVED CANARY.

The following incident, told by Evelyn Archer in the British Weekly, is given in the words of her uncle, who observed it: "I was sitting in my dining-room one summer's day reading, when I noticed that my neighbor's canary was hopping about the garden, and at the same time I saw a strange cat creeping stealthily up the path, ready at any moment to pounce on its victim. Thinking it was time to interfere, I opened the French windows, and was stepping out, when a big black cat sprang from the garden wall, and before I could reach the bird, had taken it in its mouth, and after a moment's hesitation brought the bird up to me for protection and laid it at my feet. I picked up the bird, expecting to find it bitten, but it was absolutely unharmed, and on restoring it to its lawful owners I learned that the black cat also belonged to them, and had been brought up with the bird. Seeing the bird's danger, the cat had come to the rescue and saved it from the very jaws of death."

OLD PROSPECTOR PICKS UP \$3,500 IN MOJAVE DESERT.

Thirty-five hundred dollars' worth of gold in one chunk—a nugget weighing ten and three-quarter pounds—has been found near the head of Red Rock Canyon on the Mojave Desert by Dave Bowman, an old-time placer miner, according to Lance Underwood, who arrived in Bakersfield from Mojave.

Mr. Bowman was not prospecting when he found the nugget, according to Mr. Underwood, but was merely going into the canyon when he saw the great lump of gold. This nugget is very nearly the largest ever found in this vicinity. Mr. Bowman had no scales with which to weigh the gold, but rigged up a balance with a ten-pound hammer on one end and the nugget at the other end proved three-fourths of a pound heavier.

BABYLONIAN LAWS.

A Babylonian tablet, believed to have been buried in the earth for more than 4,000 years, has recently been unearthed, and is now in the possession of Yale University, according to a statement made some time ago. The tablet is heavily encrusted, but part of it has been cleaned and deciphered. It is believed to contain the earliest law code so far discovered, antedating even the famous edicts of Hammurabi. The laws are written in the Sumerian language, the language of Southern Babylonia prior to its conquest by the Semites or Accadians in the time of Hammurabi, who began to reign over Babylonia in B. C. 2379. Owing to the imperfect knowledge of the language, the work of deciphering is extremely difficult, but the university expects to have a complete translation made and pub-

lished. The laws that have been translated refer to legislation concerning injuries to women, the repudiation of children who have perhaps been adopted, elopements, the hire of boats and cattle, and provision for the killing of a hired ox by a lion. These laws are believed to have been written about 2500 B. C.

"SEEING THE WIND."

It is said that any one may actually see the wind by means of a common hand-saw. The experiment is simple enough to be worth trying, at least. According to those who have made the experiment, all that is necessary is a hand-saw and a good breeze. On any blowy day hold the saw against the wind. That is, if the wind is in the north, hold the saw with one end pointing east and the other west. Hold the saw with the teeth uppermost and tip it slowly toward the horizon until it is an angle of about 45 degrees. By glancing along the edge of the teeth you can "see the wind"; it will be pouring over the edge of the saw much after the manner that water pours over a waterfall. This is doubtless due to the fact that there are always fine particles of dust in the air, and in a strong breeze the wind forces against the slanting sides of the saw, slides up the surface and suddenly "pours over" when it reaches the top. It is doubtless the tiny particles that make the air dust-laden that can be seen falling over the edge of the saw as the wind current drops, but it is about as near as any one can get to seeing the wind under normal conditions.

A TOWN OF OFFICE-HOLDERS.

The glory of Nickletown, Kan., is now like the glory that was Rome's—gone. Time was when Nickletown aspired to be the county seat of Woodson County and to be rated among the flourishing county towns of Kansas. But those aspirations, along with nearly all of Nickletown's population, have departed. Nickletown, however, refuses to relinquish its identity as a real town. It is going to hold a town election next spring and select regular officers. There is one cheerful feature in it for the male residents of Nickletown—all of them will get offices. There are now only four families left in the town. T. Q. Allen, Frank Willis, George Cowles and Oscar Mulsow are the men now remaining. Cowles is at present police judge. He says that office suits him and he wants to keep it. The other three have agreed to let him have his little whim gratified. So the trio all plan to run for mayor and the two losers will constitute the town council. It's up to the women to cast the deciding vote, as all three men say they will vote for themselves. It is considered likely that the man who treats his wife best in the time between now and election will stand the rosier chance of getting to sign "Mayor" after his name. Nickletown is in the northeastern part of Woodson County.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, MARCH 3, 1915.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

Forced to ford a swollen stream near Winchester, Va., when his buggy capsized, William L. Kuhn, a wealthy stock-raiser, owes his life to the fact that he had a cork leg. Buoyed up by the artificial limb, Kuhn easily reached shore in safety. His horse was drowned in the swift-flowing current.

The village of Eldorado, Ohio, ten miles east of Richmond, Ind., is not an inviting spot for undertakers who may be seeking a location. The year just closed established a record of a "deathless town," not a death being recorded during the period. Eldorado has a population of between 200 and 300.

Fire started in the famous dwelling house on Highland avenue, Medford, Mass., owned by Charles Bloomerth, but the prompt arrival of the Malden and Medford fire departments saved the building. The house was built by Bloomerth, who has but one arm, of various materials which Bloomerth picked up, and he built it unassisted.

Among the wounded who have arrived in Moscow from the front is Olga Krasilnikoff, 19 years old. After taking part in nineteen battles in Poland she was wounded in the foot. The girl enlisted under a man's name and this deception has just been discovered. The Cross of St. George, fourth degree, has been awarded to her.

Several years ago Peter Gross, of Gillespie, Ill., was offered 200 acres of land in Virginia in exchange for a horse. As he prized the horse and had not seen the land, Gross entered into the trade reluctantly. Gross, while visiting friends at Alton, Ill., announced that coal had been discovered on his Virginia land and that he had sold the mining rights for \$400,000.

What is an inch of rain? We read about so many inches or fractions of an inch of precipitation and pass it by lightly as of little moment. Few, if any, of us realizes what an inch of rain really is, though every one can roughly measure off the length or depth of an inch. But when it comes to rain we fondly imagine an inch of it is

but a trifle on Nature's part. Not so; it is a tremendous quantity. To begin with, an inch is a heavy rainfall. It is more than falls in New York City in a week. It is five times more than fell in New York City during those forty-six days of drought which ended on October 15 last, but that was the longest dry period in the history of the New York Weather Bureau. However, an inch can fall in a day without much trouble, but it is a titanic amount of water, little as the depth seems to sound. This means literally, of course, that the amount of water descending from the skies would cover the surrounding territory to the depth of one inch, provided it did not run away or soak into the ground. There are 209,218 acres comprised within the limits of New York City. An inch of rain falling on that area would fill 125,530,800 barrels containing 45 gallons each, or 5,648,886,000 gallons in all. This water would weigh 23,013,980 tons, or the almost incomprehensible total of 46,027,960,000 pounds.

JOKES AND JESTS

Liza—When yer goin' ter git married, Polly, my dear?
Polly—Never. Liza—Why? Polly—Well, yer see, I won't marry Bill w'en 'e ain't sober, an' 'e won't marry me w'en 'e is.

The Gushing Young Thing—Oh, professor! you must come to our affair to-morrow. All my friends are coming, though they say they haven't a rag to wear! He—I shall be delighted!

Sergeant—Halt! You can't go there. Private Murphy—Why not, sir? Sergeant—Because it's the general's tent. Private Murphy—Then, bedad, what are they doing with "Private" above the door?

"I notice," remarked Brusquely, "that you took your hat off when you telephoned just now, and then put it back again. May I ask you why?" "Certainly," replied Courtly. "I was telephoning to a lady."

How do Scrappington and his wife get on?" "Terribly! They have both turned vegetarians. They eat nothing but mushrooms." "What for?" "Each is hoping the other will swallow a toadstool. And neither seems to care much which gets it."

"Beg pardon, sir," observed the tough-looking waiter suggestively, "gentlemen at this table usually—er—remember me, sir." "I don't wonder," said the customer cordially. "That mug of yours would be hard to forget." And, picking up his bill, he strolled leisurely off in the direction of the cashier.

Mrs. Cronan heard her little granddaughter Margaret crying as if in great pain, and hastened to the child. "Why, dear, what is the matter?" inquired Mrs. Cronan. "Did you meet with an accident?" "N-no, grandma!" sobbed Margaret. "It w-wasn't an accident. M-mother did it on p-purpose!"

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

HOUSE BUILT OF WALNUT TIMBER.

J. B. P. Gaylor, a farmer living on South Sycamore street, five miles north of Mountain View, Ark., lives in a house built entirely of walnut logs. The house was built more than thirty years ago, and is in a good state of preservation. The logs are hand-hewn and fastened together with walnut pegs. At the time it was built there was no market in this country for walnut timber, but these logs now would be worth hundreds of dollars.

A NOVEL CURE.

If in need of a surgical operation, try falling downstairs, is a prescription which is not being recommended by W. J. Parker, a Corunna, Mich., lawyer, though it effected a cure in his case. Parker slipped on an icy walk, injuring his ankle, which swelled to twice its normal size. Treatment did not relieve it, and he hobbled about on crutches while suffering great pain. One evening as he started down a basement stairs to attend a furnace fire he tripped and fell to the bottom. In the moments of agitation which followed he scrambled to his feet, decided no bones were broken, and put coal in the furnace. Then he went back upstairs to discover that he had walked without crutches. Surgeons who examined the ankle say the first fall caused an obscure dislocation and that the second one reduced it. Parker has discarded the crutches permanently.

A SATISFIED PRISONER.

Maggie Adamson probably holds the record of spending the longest term in a Kansas county jail. She will leave the institution to go to the county home after twenty years in the Leavenworth county bastile. County officials fear Maggie will not be satisfied in her new home after her long residence in the jail. Maggie's former home was near Easton. Twenty years ago her mind became unbalanced and she was brought to Leavenworth and given a trial in Probate Court. The Lunacy Commission found her insane, but for some reason no application for her admission to one of the State asylums was made, so she just lived on at the jail and gradually became a fixed part of the institution. One sheriff after another passed her on to the next and the sheriffs collected fifty cents per day for her keep. Maggie had the mind of a little child, but she was a willing worker, and dishwashing and other odd jobs fell to her lot. Several years ago permission for her admission to one of the State hospitals was granted, but the wife of the sheriff then in office had become so attached to Maggie that she kicked up a big rumpus when it was proposed to take her away. And Maggie appeared perfectly satisfied to stay through all the years. Succeeding sheriffs looked upon her as a member of the family and she was well clothed and cared for. Only rarely did she mingle with the other prisoners, and then only in the jail corridor.

A "HORSE FAMINE" PREDICTED BY EXPERTS.

The steamship Verona took away from this port recently 250 horses as part of an order for 10,000 placed in this country by Italy. The ship Shenandoah, under the British flag, sailed with 300 horses for use in the English army.

Since the European war began, last August, expert dealers figure that 60,000 American horses have been exported to Europe and about 10,000 mules. Orders are being filled and other orders going begging which demand about 60,000 more.

Greece has recently come into the market with France, England and Italy bidding for American horses, and if Germany, Austria and Turkey had a free path of the sea the demand from that source would also be enormous.

These are the facts that indicate a threatened horse famine in America. The horse, apparently contemptuously tossed into the ditch of time by the motor car and the curtailment of racing, rears its head again.

The price of horses has doubled since last August, and after foreign governments buy their horses they have to pay from \$60 to \$90 apiece for passage.

"And if the war should stop this spring, or whenever it does," said Frederick Wagner, president of the Fiss, Doerr & Carroll Horse Company, "the condition of threatened famine here would be worse, because the inhabitants of the countries that had been at war would have to resume their normal occupations. Immediate resumption of agriculture would be a necessity.

"Their own horses having been commandeered and for the most part slaughtered, they would have to turn for the purchase of horses here. With the war over, the seas would be free to all nations and that would mean that Germany and Austria would be in our markets as well as the allies.

"Sweden and Norway have always bought horses from us. The African horses—Arabs and Berbs—are useless for industrial purposes, and the splendid breed of Flanders will have been about exhausted by the sweeping drafts made upon this stock.

"The demand of the European agents will bring a decided pinch this spring—especially in the South and Southwest, where the foreign orders have been filled. The negroes of the South, their mules idle for the winter, have been carried away by the fat prices offered and agriculture in some parts of the South may be embarrassed.

"These horses that are being taken away from the country in such large numbers are the class for which there is the present greatest demand. Thoroughbred, hot-blooded horses are not wanted. It is the rugged, plodding animal that is required. These are horses to be used for dragging heavy loads over rough roads in the war country.

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It is labeled "Whiskey," but it contains a snake. If you have a friend addicted to drink, you can cure him of the habit with this bottle. Catch him with a "bun" on, hand him the bottle, and tell him to open it. When he complies, a long snake squirms out of the bottle in his hand, and he thinks he is seeing things. A sure cure for the jim-jams! It also affords no end of amusement among boys in various other ways. Price, 10c. each by mail.

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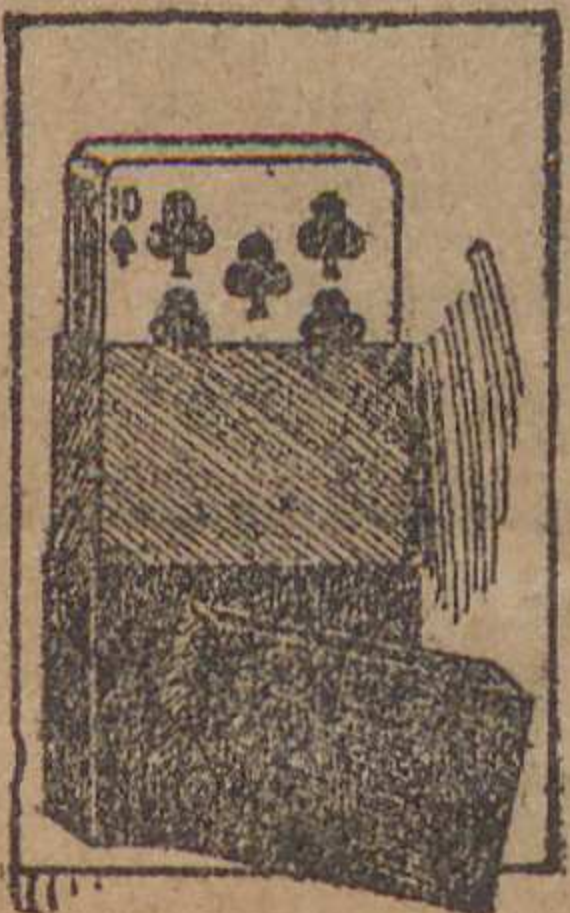
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